

**The Academy of Religion
and Psychical Research**

**1984 Annual Conference
PROCEEDINGS**

**MYSTICISM, CREATIVITY AND PSI:
A SEARCH FOR A NEW SCIENCE**

**The Academy of Religion and Psychical Research
P. O. Box 614 • Bloomfield, Connecticut 06002**

THE ACADEMY OF RELIGION AND PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

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MYSTICISM, CREATIVITY AND PSI:
A SEARCH FOR A NEW SCIENCE

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May 27-29, 1984

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Edited by Mary Carman Rose

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MYSTICISM, PSI, AND CREATIVITY

Mary Carman Rose

One distinctive feature of this Academy is that at our meetings, in our publications, and in our personal conversations with each other we virtually always implicitly and sometimes explicitly encourage reflection on important issues which in other professional organizations are rejected, perhaps by virtue of ignorance or prejudice on the part of members or by virtue of their commitment to modes of inquiry which are intrinsically incapable of illuminating possibilities to which the Academy gives a great deal of attention. An example is the present interest on the part of some members of the Academy in the metaphysical and ontological conditions implicit in an objectivist interpretation of NDE and OBE. Much, perhaps most, current work in philosophy (and even in theology) presupposes that time and space, causality and matter, and indeterminacy as we know them at the subatomic, Newtonian, or relativity levels comprise all of reality.

Also, most members of the Academy freely draw on valuable concepts and conclusions which have been of central importance in the very roots of Western or Eastern inquiry but which are either ignored or forgotten today. One such belief is implicit in the theme of this conference: the belief that there is interdependence among areas of human concern and inquiry. Thus, as you will remember, in the "Symposium" Plato has Diotima ask Socrates "Is not the true the beautiful"; and later she introduces the "science of beauty everywhere." Also, as this point of view is developed in later Platonism it becomes the conclusion that inquiry into the good is inquiry into both the true and the beautiful--i.e., into three inextricably inter-twined areas which are almost always separated in current reflection on any one of them.

It is in the light of such facts as the foregoing that we will do well to reflect on the topic of this conference: Mysticism, psi, and creativity, together with that important question: A new science? My thesis is, first, that the recognition of the inter-relatedness among psi, mysticism, and creativity has been traditionally a part of philosophical and religious thought of both East and West; and that this inter-relatedness among the three is both the area of inquiry of a potential science and the mode of inquiry of that science.

MEANING OF MYSTICISM, PSI, AND CREATIVITY. It is not wise to attempt to begin this inquiry with firm definitions of these three terms. It is preferable at the outset to start with what I will call characterizations of them. By characterizations of mysticism and creativity I mean a tentative announcement of how initially the terms will be used; and in the case of psi phenomena I mean extensive rather than intensive definitions. There are at least two reasons why at this point to offer what are intended to be firm, and perhaps not to be reconsidered, definitions would be to

block the road to inquiry.

First, one might rule out at the outset phenomena which are relevant to the inquiry but not encompassed in one's definition. One might, for example, define creativity in terms of that of the artist instead of choosing so broad a concept of creativity as to include potentially all creativity in all areas of investigation. Second, currently one might work out satisfactory definitions of our three terms from the perspective of, say, Western gnosticism or any one of the Eastern interpretations of man and reality. What we need for our project, however, is a meta-religious and meta-philosophical understanding of our three terms. That is, we need an understanding which will encompass without distortion all data pertaining to these subjects which derive from each of the distinctive interpretations of man and reality. I suggest the following characteristics.

Mysticism. In each of the interpretations of life which provide mystical experiences (and not all do) mysticism is interpreted as a first-hand encounter with normally hidden aspects of reality which are taken by each way of life to be ultimate--e.g., the Brahman of the Vedantist, the nameless in which the Theravada Buddhist finds nirvana, or God the Father of Christian mysticism. Many--perhaps most--accounts of the de facto diversity among mystical experiences make one or more of three mistakes which distort these experiences. 1. They interpret all such experiences from the perspective of one view of reality--e.g., from the perspective of Zen Buddhism or Vedantism. 2. They interpret all such experiences from the perspective of one mystic, a frequent choice for this role behind the mystical experiences of Meister Eckhardt. 3. They emphasize what they take to be resemblances among mystical experiences without taking sufficient note of the differences among them. This last is one source of the concept known as Perennial Philosophy. I suggest that as important as any aspects of the study of mysticism is the need for initial caution in noting both differences and resemblances among the types of mysticism and also attention to the inextricable relations between the content of the experience and the mode of achieving it.

Psychism. Psychism is associated with mystical encounter with reality in all the great world religions and in Western gnosticism. A propos of this last one thinks of Socrates' dreams; his encounter with the oracle; the Platonic interpretation of inspiration; and what I suggest we not only may, but properly will, accept as the mysticism of Socrates' account of his conversations with Diotima in the "Symposium." Yet the definition of psychism in these diverse traditions has had little attention per se, although in all these tradition psychism names the same types of human experiences. I identify psychism here in terms of these types of experiences--viz., OBE, NDE, precognition, revelatory dreams, ESP, psychic diagnoses of spiritual and physical malaise, visions of ostensible excarnates, aware-

ness of activities at distant places, and invisible, intangible beings such as angels or devas.

Creativity. The promising new field of inquiry with which this conference is concerned will be interdisciplinary. And one interdisciplinary feature of it is its connection with the fact that there are at present at least three philosophical positions concerning the nature of creativity, each of which is rooted in a particular view of man's investigative relations to reality. Technically this has given rise to three mutually incompatible views concerning the status and source of that order which creativity discerns and, perhaps, attempts to communicate. These views are as follows.

1. In the complex, highly diversified family of philosophical positions which have dominated American and British philosophy (and to some extent continental philosophy) during the past five or six decades, creativity is interpreted--sometimes clearly and explicitly and sometimes vaguely and implicitly--as the fiat of the dominant person or persons. For the benefit of philosophical colleagues who are present, I will point out that it will be a matter of controversy which dominant 20th century thinkers are to be included here. I suggest the following. For the critical realism of George Santayana, the instrumentalism of John Dewey, and the atheistic existentialism of Sartre each instance of creativity is properly interpreted as a human imposition or fabrication of order. It is not a discernment of an objective order. As I will suggest below, this is not a fruitful understanding of creativity to make fundamental at this conference.

2. There is the largely implicit view of Martin Heidegger which today plays a dominant role in philosophical thought, having supplanted the above-mentioned views of the early part of this century. The various types of narrowness concerning creativity which were offered by these earlier views were instrumental in preparing American and British thinkers to be open to Heidegger's thought, with its greater generosity toward and greater insight into the human self and, hence, human creativity. Heidegger's view is that creativity is the discernment of the ready-at-hand, of the unconcealed, of that which poet, artist, or properly oriented philosopher can make immediately present to all of us who possess the requisite acculturation and training.

3. There is the view that creativity is the finding, developing, articulating, and defending of an objective order. This is the view of creativity implicit in all the great world religions and also in the thought of Plato; Aristotle; Thomas Aquinas; Bonaventura; the profoundly misunderstood and under-appreciated Descartes; Spinoza; the German idealists Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel; and in our century Whitehead, Maritain, Teilhard de Chardin, and Samuel Alexander, to mention only a few. On this view

the creative thinker is not the strong person who creates order. Rather, he is the gifted investigator who finds an objective order. Also; this third view of creativity differs from the Heideggerian view, for its sees creativity as plumbing the depths of reality which are by no means "ready at hand" and for the discernment of which acculturation is not sufficient. There is needed a holistic development of the self, and especially a development of the spirit and intellect. It is primarily this interpretation of creativity with which ideally this conference is concerned.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MYSTICISM AND PSYCHISM FOR CREATIVITY. We have noted that psychic phenomena and mystical experiences occur in all the world religions and other ways of life which, like the world religions, are based on claims of deep metaphysical insight although they are not usually classified as religions. There are, of course, irreducible differences among these metaphysical insights; but they all claim to possess metaphysical truth, objective truth. This last is one reason why only the third philosophical view of creativity will suffice in this context. What is the significance of these differences for this inquiry. And very great differences there are among them! Zen Buddhism, Vedantism, the Dialogues of Plato, Plotinus' pantheism, Taoism, Theravada Buddhism, and, of course, orthodox Christianity, the several forms of Judaism, Islam and the Platonism of the Sufis--all these report highly diversified views of reality. This is a topic as extensive as it is central to this study. I will offer here only my conclusions on this topic.

I suggest that each of these views does indeed view reality truly but from a limited perspective. Because these views are grounded in different aspects of reality, the differences among their reports of reality are real and irreducible. Further, as I have indicated, each provides insight into psychism, mysticism, and creativity which no other perspective can provide. This means also that no one of them can be demythologized into the beliefs and language of another. Christianity is not Zen; and Zen is not Vedantism.

On the other hand, given the presupposition that each of these views provides insight into the one reality, some resemblances among them are to be expected. I suggest that resemblances among them are apparent in the axiological orientation of this reality--i.e., in their views on values. To be sure, it would be a great mistake to conclude that these teachings concerning ideal human values are identical; but it would also be a mistake not to inquire into the significance of apparent resemblances or to conclude that these resemblances are only linguistic. One thinks of the Confucian, "Do not do unto others as you would not have them do to you.;" of the Taoist sage who puts himself last and so he is first; of the Buddhist eight fold path; and of numerous other instances of shared values among the great spiritual paths.

In what follows I will examine the contributions of mysticism and psychism in respect to creativity in the following areas: philosophy; the empirical study of nature; the arts; and inquiry into religion.

MYSTICISM. a. Philosophy. Until fairly recently mysticism was permitted to contribute very little to modern Western philosophy. This is paradoxical because virtually all Eastern philosophy in whatever geographical location it has been carried out is fundamentally dependent on mystical insights, and it is feasible to argue that Western philosophy has roots in mystical encounters with reality--i.e., the thought of the pre-Socratics and Plato. The winds of change are blowing, however; and it is now realistic to hope that the time is not far off when one can freely introduce mystical elements and experiences into professional philosophy, where in fact they are much needed.

So far philosophical views in our day have been worked out *a priori*--e.g. "Being cannot be known." (Kant and Santayana); "Being cannot be spoken of." (logical empiricism); and "Being and the desire to know it have no existential significance" (Sartre). Most recently this topic has been dominated by the thought of Martin Heidegger who has been too easily interpreted as offering a genuine mystical insight into the nature of being.⁷ I suggest that in the contemporary study of ontology the offering of the genuine mystic has not yet been tapped by professional philosophy. The true mystics, however, have crucial insight needed in ontology; for they know some aspects of reality which, according to their perspective, are ultimate being. Thus, the experience of the mystic provides evidence concerning the accessibility of what we may call independent reality, while most mystics know the yearning and perhaps the preparation of heart and mind which have made these experiences possible to them.

Indeed, mystical experiences and insights and concepts derived from them are already given roles in speculative metaphysics, albeit on a very small scale. In part the burgeoning of Easternization of Western thought accounts for this, although perhaps the mystic strains in Teilhard de Chardin's speculation have other sources. Yet so far as speculative metaphysics is concerned, not enough attention has been paid to the distinctiveness of Western mysticism, and in particular to that of pagan Platonism, Christianity, and Jewish Platonism. Too often the mystic chosen from the West to illumine the possible uses of Eastern mysticism is the atypical Meister Eckhardt, whose mystical experiences are probably genuine but not always genuinely Christian. The pantheistic metaphysics based on selected aspects of Hinduism, for example, needs supplementation by the mysticism fostered by the spirituality of those ways of life based not in Indian monism but rather in the harmonious inter-relatedness of distinct aspects of reality which is central in the Western metaphysics and transcendence.

The mysticism which finds that reality has an axiological orientation and that love of the values inherent in reality is both preparation for and result of mystical experience, also can make contributions to epistemological inquiry. Certainly the claim of mystical experience needs to be examined as evidence that the human mind is not alienated from reality. And I suggest that it will be fruitful to examine the mystical experience as evidence that holistic preparation of the thinker for inquiry might be an important in philosophy and other areas as it is in mysticism.

b. Science. The foregoing obviously has import for the present critique of value-free science. If compassion; love of truth; desire to serve man in truth; and appreciation of the beauty of truth are essential to investigation of reality along any one mystical path, then perhaps they are also important in present-day science and may be essential for its future development.

C.Religion. This is a day of ecumenism. But while we frequently hear the word ecumenism; there is no lack of organizations dedicated to the fostering of ecumenical activities; and we hear on every hand of the need to be open-minded, we still have decisive steps to take. Absolutely essential to the ecumenism of the future is the significance of the real nature of each distinctive religious path and the unwillingness to distort any one of them by viewing it from an alien perspective. Respect for the de facto contents of the mystical experience fostered by each of the world religions and other ways of life will encourage this ecumenical step.

d. The Artist. In recent years Western aesthetics has failed to avail itself of some of the real treasures of its proper field of inquiry--i.e., of the transformative power of beauty and of the energy available to the person who is open to that power. To be sure, present-day aesthetics is highly diversified, and it is difficult to characterize it. I can, however, point out what a rapprochement between the artist and Christian mystical experiences would restore to aesthetics. And to point this out will be to draw attention to fundamentally important work for the artist to perform and for the aesthetician and critic to analyze and develop.

This work is the artist's telling in both verbal and non-verbal form the content, challenge, and the spiritual achievement of the successful seeking and finding of the transcendent personal God. We have today no lack of occasions in which the artist, aesthetician, and historian of art has praised Hindu, Taoist, Zen, and Theravada Buddhist mystical experiences which are valuable, but no more valuable within our present inquiry than those mystical experiences which occur within the sustained attempt to remain faithful to the two greatest commandments of Christianity-- i.e., to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We

have instead seen the rejection of the distinctiveness of the mystical experience of divine transcendence; the reinterpretation of these experiences along Eastern lines; and the development of religious dance, music, and painting which expresses man's seeking spiritual development in finding God but in which the concept of divine transcendence essential to the Western monotheisms has not been sufficiently distinguished from divine immanence.

PSYCHISM. a. Philosophy. Study of NDE might free the philosophical community from the limitations of the current dominant metaphysical naturalism. For NDE suggest the feasibility and necessity for giving up the presently widespread philosophical conviction that the human individual literally is his body, and that time, space, and matter (however these are defined) are categories fundamental to all reality. b. Here I wish to draw attention to two areas. First, as many persons have already pointed out, the findings of psychic research have tremendous import for the relation between mind and body. A fortiori this is true of the evidence of the reality of psychic powers which animal and behavioral psychology ignore and which Jungian psychology has recognized but which qua science has yet to develop. Second, there is the challenge to our understanding of the limits and powers of the method of science which is presented by the current need to include psychic experiences as evidence in psychology and to include psychic research among the sciences. If our current understanding of science (or of philosophical analysis) does not provide means for fruitful non-reductive, non-distorting work with psychic phenomena, then we will do well to accept this limitation as a challenge to seek new methodological approaches. The assumption that empiricism as we know it can illuminate psychic experiences is without basis. And the promise of parapsychology for development in epistemology and in development of scientific methodology is probably one of the greatest challenges of all the history of science and certainly a frontier of research at the present time.

c. Theology. In the foregoing I called attention to the ecumenical significance of mystical experience. In discussing briefly the psychic in relation to religious studies I will focus on Christian theology--i.e., the ongoing project of interpreting, developing, systematizing, and finding adequate philosophical bases for Christian revelation. This is a time of great ferment in this area, with perhaps the maximal activity and diversity in Catholic thought. At present there is Christian theology based in the social sciences (e.g., the thought of Hans Kung); in Eastern religions (e.g. the thought of Wm. Johnston); in Jungian psychology (e.g., the work of Proffitt and John Welch); in the process philosophy of Whitehead and Teilhard de Chardin; and, of particular interest in this context, in the historical-critical work in the Bible. Each of these approaches, valuable in itself, becomes the basis for revision of traditional Christian

teachings. What has not been included in this burgeoning project of revision, however, is the long tradition of Christian psychism as well as mysticism. The facts of the history of psychism and mysticism within Christianity could newly illumine traditional beliefs which are now rejected or modified fundamentally because the study of them is carried on without reference to well known types of experience of which they are an example.

d. Art. In my discussion of mysticism in relation to art I drew attention to the role of the artist in using his preferred medium to express the mystically achieved insights of his chosen spiritual path--e.g., Sufism, Vedantism, Kaballistic Judaism, or Franciscan Christianity. I wish here to emphasize another role of the artist which is relevant to virtually all areas of inquiry. I have in mind the widely recognized intuitive powers of the artist.

Intuition, of course, has many meanings. In this context, I am using intuition in a sense well known to us all--i.e., to name the power of an individual to discern structure, content, and dynamics of the object he has chosen to express in his own art form and medium--dance, music, drama, architecture. In the sense in which I am using it here intuition is of central importance to experiences and literature in which members of SFF and ARPR are interested. Philosophy in our day has paid little attention to it. Paradoxically, however, in this generation in which linguistic clarity and self-consciousness in reflection and inquiry are the chief concerns of many philosophers, intuition is often, in fact, appealed to but not explained and certainly not justified as epistemologically legitimate. In addition, in this century a few thinkers have called attention to the significance of intuition--Bergson, Suzuki, and Aurobindo--although their suggestions on this score have not had the response they merit.

Intuition is at the heart of some artistic creativity. On the other hand, perhaps the artist may work without appeal to his intuition. Suppose, for example, that he wishes to express in words or in oils how a wild animal--say a squirrel--would appear to the person who has no power of intuitive discernment of the subjectivity of the animal. But I also suggest that it is a worthwhile aesthetic hypothesis that fulfillment of artistic creativity requires the power and some use of intuition. We are accustomed to expect that the artist will be able to express genuine aspects of the person whose face he paints, whose joy or dread he dances, whose inwardness of yearning he expresses in music.

The intuition of the artist is discernment of something true and outside himself. He illuminates, interprets, articulates, and communicates it. How, then, is the artist's intuition related to the speculation which is not

a guess but a discernment of how some things really are? This discernment is true creativity, not only in art but in all the areas which I have examined in respect to the usefulness to them of psychism and mystical experiences. If these observations are true, then indeed creativity studied in relation to psychism and mysticism is a most important area.

Conclusion. Is this area a science? Is it new? In the context of truth-seeking new has at least two meanings today. First, it names that which is totally new, which has no known historical precedent, which has not been said or done before. Second, there is also, however, the newness in any area of concern in which as Gerard Manley Hopkins put it, "There is the dearest freshness deep down things." What is new in this sense is a new burgeoning of truth already well grounded in human experience and understanding. Obviously the relation among psi, mysticism, and creativity is not new in the first sense. Rather, it has roots in the oldest, most significant human concerns. This is why it was easy to find examples of the relations among these three in both East and West.

What of the scientific status and potentialities of this area? If science means organized, systematic study for the sake of determining objective truth and principles, then it is a science. But if science means inquiry carried on by the guiding principles of any other area, then almost certainly it is not a science. We are not dealing here only with matter or life *per se*. The methods of investigation sufficient for these areas will almost certainly not be sufficient for our new science. For this science there will be needed major creativity in the epistemology of investigation itself.

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IS ESP A CHANNEL TO CREATIVITY AND MYSTICISM OR A BY-PRODUCT OF THEM?

By Edgar Wirt

Abstract: The author explores various aspects of the nature of and relations among psi theory, the occult, and mysticism. He concludes that creativity is a characteristic of mysticism and psi rather than a cause or effect of either. We can promote creativity by seeking release from conformity. Creativity comes by leaps of intuition.

This question itself may be questionable. It is well said that what we can learn of nature is only what can be exposed by the kind of questions we ask. In pursuit of this topic, some other questions and considerations are relevant.

As a first consideration, psychical research has ranged pretty widely; but still only a limited range of paranormal, psychical phenomena are now commonly cataloged as forms of ESP. Still fewer have been accepted for investigation in parapsychology--generally those which were best suited for developing unimpeachable experimental evidence and documentation.

But popularly ESP includes various other forms of strange perceptions and impressions, including some revelations through meditation and other comparable practices. And beyond this scope are other popularized avenues of formalized psychical perception such as dowsing, scrying, planchette, pendulum, and even astrology in which various devices and procedures and responses for which no sources are visible or verifiable.

These last mentioned areas have not been fully extricated from the aura of "occult" that surrounds them. Perhaps for that reason they seem suspect, or at least unprofitable prospects for investigation, in the eyes of serious parapsychologists. For example, since the 1920s the published works of Barrett¹ and Besterman² on dowsing and scrying have stood alone, at the same time having opened and closed serious investigation in those fields. Those works were not conclusive, yet they successfully transferred the focus of investigation from physical or psychic causes. There the matter has stood, with little increment, since that time.

Many members of ARPR do not limit their concern for psychical phenomena and research to the most acceptable and demonstrable areas, in as much as the spiritual and religious implications are not thus limited. In ARPR we have an unusually compatible climate for such expanded thinking, both as to the scope of Psi and its implications. However, even beyond all that I have mentioned are still other forms of paranormal knowing--and doing--that comprise

the vast field of occultism in which we may not feel as comfortable or as welcome. What about apportation, levitation, dematerialization, and such? Or ethnic systems such as wicca, huna, obeah, etc.?

Nevertheless, how ESP (and other Psi phenomena) are related to creativity and mysticism--or how they are related to anything else--depends on how those many other things in this vast field are related. We would be short-changing our understanding if we considered for this purpose only the more readily demonstrable and acceptable phenomena referred to as ESP. While we may suspect that there is a relationship between ESP, creativity, and mysticism (as indicated by our topic), do we have any warrant to suppose that our favored forms of ESP have such a relationship that is not shared by all other types of paranormal phenomena?

Even the transformative vision of the mystic, including that God's-eye perception of things which is one aspect of mysticism, (or any modest portions of such awareness), likewise must be included within the total of extra-sensory perception and knowing. Consequently the relationship of ESP to mysticism may not be simply cause or effect, neither stepping-stone nor by-product, but a much closer kinship. Maybe, then, we are not asking the right question.

Then comes the further question as to the relationship between mysticism and occultism, which historically have often been mixed together, practiced together, and to both of which much creativity has been attributed. The relationship between ESP and mysticism can be pursued in terms of the relationship between occultism and mysticism. It is this overall relationship of mystical and occult that I propose to explore next. It will have significant bearing on our thinking and conclusions--and on the kind of questions we want to ask.

The Occult: All areas of Psi were at one time, and legitimately, just part of what we call occult--and, of course, they still are. Having borrowed some aspects of the occult for scientific investigation has not altered their generic relationship. This vast field has been known euphemistically as Occult Crafts and Occult Arts--the latter an apt description in as much as occult mastery is formalized in ritual more than in formula or recipe (the double-talk of alchemy notwithstanding).

But "the occult" is now a pejorative term shunned by investigators and teachers, by churches, by the public in general--and even by some students who actually study some occult arts which, however, are presented under other names. That is, some occult knowledge and practices are part of the stock in trade of various esoteric and self-development programs (such as A Course in Miracles).

Whereas in the past occult was associated with great or even transcendent knowledge, today it is more frequently associated

with witchery, sorcery, trickery and deceit (or even the Anti-christ!). This in spite of the innocent origin of the word, and in spite of its legitimate scientific uses. Literally occult means covered over and in that sense concealed--not so much that it has been hidden deliberately (though there has been some of that, too!) but more in the sense that we simply fail to recognize it. Like "The Purloined Letter," it is right there in plain sight for anyone who can recognize it and take hold of it. But we don't look in the right direction, or in the right manner.

Yet in astronomy, when the moon passes in front of a star, astronomers say the star is occulted; there is an occultation. When any of our space probes has been programmed to curve around another planet, its orbit was plotted in advance to identify a zone where it would be "occulted" from the sun by the presence of that planet (interrupting its source of power) and another "zone of occultation" from the Earth (interrupting radio communication). There is nothing esoteric, let alone occult, about these meanings. (In this light, might it be said that our appreciation of paranormal possibilities has been occulted by our insistence on physical reality as the basis of all experience?)

But popularly the occult is and has been fearsome, a bane and a ban, and perhaps rightly so. It takes in so many facets of paranormal function, with traditional or ad hoc explanations, where it is hard to sort out what is true, maybe true, or probably false, or at least distorted truth. "Dabbling in the occult" may be innocent and harmless, but there is reasonable concern that some persons will go overboard and plunge into occult theory beyond their capacity to integrate it with rational experience. (Even worse, it leads to gross scientific and religious heresies--which are more to be feared than sin, or dementia!)

And yet occultism has never been completely divorced from religious philosophies, theologies, and cosmologies. Its somewhat disjointed theories are often extensions or applications of metaphysical principles that are implicit in most great religions. In its Christian connections it has been supported by the prediction, "The things that I do shall you do also, and greater things." At times it has been tolerated, but at more times repudiated by the Christian church. But so too has mysticism at times been fostered and at other times been suspect as heresy.

Many historically bona fide mystics have been involved in occult arts, especially during the age of alchemy. Actually much of the jargon of alchemy, that seems to refer to transmutation of matter, is really code talk referring to transmutation of human experience, knowledge, and character. Their "Philosopher's Stone" is the mystical experience itself, that God's-eye view of all things.

In the popular mind, however, the term mystical seems to connote more of the occult than of true mysticism; and some historians and scholars seem to share this view. The two areas are

related, not only historically but also in joint pursuit. Yet the aims and attainments of their respective pursuits can be differentiated in some ways, even though the functions overlap.

P.E.I. Bonewits,³ former editor of Gnostica magazine, made out a case that occult and mystical are two faces of the same thing, one face active, the other passive. Because occultists are busy trying to make things happen, he called this the active face. Because many mystics were not so much concerned to make things come about by paranormal means (and maybe also because many of them accepted the most undemanding way of life), he called this the passive. Thus: active and passive occultism. Another factor in this distinction will be touched on later.

There is an element of truth in this contrast. Occultism could be described in terms of what occultists do. But how could mysticism be described in terms of what mystics do? The classic picture of mystic saints is indeed one of non-demanding, non-aggression, though not of inactivity. A mystic might labor at his tasks from dawn to dark, but not be concerned about changing anything--except himself. That is his major concern, what he "works at."

The Mystical: Definitions of mysticism usually feature one aspect, that there can be human experience of the divine, that is, direct contact, communion, and union with deity. When a mystic attains such a revelation of his relationship to, and his identity with, his God, that experience is completely satisfying; nothing is wanting, nothing lacking. So what else is there to work for, except to cherish and repeat the experience? Many mystics have reported only this portion of their experience.

Yet from the vantage point of such a God's-eye view, the mystic can see and understand how and why things work out the way they do. This other aspect of his mystical revelation also embraces the concept that he is part and partner in all that goes on; and as such he can participate, can direct (or request) whatever change he desires. For himself probably nothing more is needed; but on behalf of his colleagues or associates, or for any cause he espouses--well, the tales of many mystics are replete with paranormal knowledge and effects. Consider the story of the monk whose brothers watched with concern over his comatose body while "he" made an emergency trip for them to Rome where he was seen and received. An OBE? But is this not also occultism?

But the mystic, in order to maintain his precious relationship and his awareness of it, must never suppose that he has powers unique to himself. His orientation is totally theocentric. Yet to his fellows he can "beam" his knowledge and his desire for their well-being, so that actually he facilitates them in their work and spiritual progress--they perhaps not aware of anything paranormal in this. But when there is need, he can accomplish more overt things; but to him it is natural, not supernatural. To be credited with powers of his own would jeopardize his realization of his junior relationship to the source.

Nevertheless, every mystic is a potential occultist, though he may not work at it overtly. Many of them report seeing the whole world differently, and all things in it, and thereby they deal with the world differently. Between episodes of revelation, their lives are not just "business as usual" but business in an unusual way--like peering under the edges of ordinary things to see the numinous realities which they mask. An example that comes to mind is Jacob Boehme who saw in every plant its sign or "signature" which told him in what way the plant could harm or benefit mankind.

At this point it might be inferred that paranormal results (ESP et al.) are by-products of mystical knowledge. However, in other contexts this will be contra-indicated.

As to the converse, every occultist is at least a part-way mystic, in that he has secret knowledge and understanding to some degree. It must not be supposed that either mysticism or occultism is a matter of all-or-none; in both there are degrees, specialties, stages of evolution. (Some specialties in mysticism may be indicated by the variety of gnoses that have been fostered in different lodges and mystery schools.)

Any master craftsman, along with his qualifications and discipline with respect to the component details of his craft, has also an overall concept that is of a different order of magnitude from that of an apprentice. His mastery is evident, for example, in how he can improvise and adapt, when circumstances demand it, in ways that are not orthodox. Likewise the master occultist has an overview whereby he can direct forces and things in unorthodox (paranormal) ways. He may concede that those forces are apart from himself and greater than himself, but he does not shun the idea that he has a power (or has access to a power) that can direct those forces. In a word, he knows some part of what a mystic knows.

Where the mystic is concerned primarily with the knowing, with the affect of knowing, the occultist is concerned primarily with the doing, the effect of knowing. This is really the crux of Bonewits' distinction between active and passive. Both mystic and occultist approach the supernormal with awe and wonder. The mystics' wonder leads to adoration and immersion. The occultist's wonder leads to curiosity: What can he do about it? How apply it to specific circumstances? He is a technologist; knowledge is his leverage, and he may have attained knowledge only to the extent necessary for him to produce some specific effects. (To be an all around shaman, for whatever urgent human need, the mystic might be in a better position.)

Yet partial or incomplete knowledge is often very effective. To illustrate this, consider physicists who in other times demonstrated many phenomena of a vacuum, based simply on the now obsolete principle that "Nature abhors a vacuum." Or a physics student who can illustrate many phenomena of gravity on the simple basis that "All that goes up must come down."

In much the same way, many forms of ESP and other Psi phenomena are being learned by students today on the basis of various explanations, some of which may seem outlandish, none of which may be wholly adequate, but any of which can facilitate some such learning. The process is heuristic in that a premise leads to discovery of effects which in turn lead to further ideas. First fruits of many such experiments are often startling, and naturally, in the mind of the discoverer, this tends to confirm the original premise, however strange it may have seemed. If the learning program is graded, it leads to mastery of more comprehensive, more universal principles--reaching toward mystical understanding by the back door, as it were. That is, with progressive attainment an occultist may become more and more like a mystic.

At this point it might be suspected that ESP et al. are an avenue to ultimate mystical revelation.

An interesting side light here is that, among occult students who previously had many spontaneous Psi experiences, such experiences tend to diminish as their studies progress. (The same is true, it is said, for students in training as mediums.) Also their early interest in demonstrating occult principles may wane, replaced by a desire to advance more rapidly in conceptualizing mystical principles, even without the practicum.

Psi Theory: Both mysticism and occultism credit energies and their source beyond the limitations of physical human existence. Consequently, in pursuing this line, our ideas as to any relationship between Psi, psychical research, and mysticism (or occultism) will depend on and be shaped by our notions as to the basic relationships among Psi, mankind, and that "something more"--which we may or may not be ready to credit. The development of psychical research in the past century, and even in its first two decades, has biased its orientation in this respect. As Cerullo⁴ traced it out, Henry Sidgwick and other early leaders in the British Society for Psychical Research cast the die, insisting on a new direction for investigation (to the great disappointment of their Spiritualist supporters).

Whereas prior experiment had been largely in communication with the dead, those results posited a human "soul" which was independent of the body and survived bodily death. This soul was supernatural and was related to, or part of, a different order of existence which in turn was more closely related to, or part of, deity. Consequently paranormal phenomena could be attributed to the soul--and ultimately to deity. The thrust of prior investigation had been to prove the existence and continuity of a soul.

But if there was a soul with paranormal attributes which continued after death, those same attributes should be evokable in living human beings. The early work and decisions of Myers, Sidgwick, and other leaders of SPR turned the investigation into this new direction; that is, psychical phenomena were attributes

or characteristics of human beings, related to such other human phenomena as hypnotism and hysteria. This re-direction is what Cerullo called "The Secularization of the Soul." This humanistic, anthropocentric orientation has become pretty well fixed in psychical research. It has occluded (or jettisoned) the idea that humankind itself is a characteristic or manifestation of God or of a universal super-mind.

Yet, as we have pointed out, mysticism is keyed to that "something more." Its tenets (when they have been formalized apart from religious dogma) embrace the concept that all life and all mind, even all energy, are manifestations of the ONE, the ALL, the one source and creator. Carried to its ultimate application, this says that all our energy, consciousness, and creativity are ours only by proxy, by delegation, so to speak; that we manifest and utilize only divine consciousness and energy--even when we use them to deny deity or "something more." (Our "free will"!)

Consequently the gulf of theory has been widened between Psi and mysticism. Ideas that paranormal phenomena are "normal" to a higher order of existence have been superseded by the idea that they are "natural" to human beings as such. This is not to say that any intrinsic relationship between Psi and mysticism has been changed, but that our theoretical framework has shifted. To relate Psi to mysticism now requires bridging between two theoretical frameworks that are more alien to each other.

However, because paranormal functions are not "ordinary," even though they may be "natural" to human beings, we must have some new constructs, one of which is different levels of states of consciousness--which different states, however, are still functions of individual human minds. Different states of consciousness can perceive different orders of reality. Thus the alternative to "ordinary reality" is not chaos (as we might have expected) but some different reality.

A further implication is that there may be unlimited varieties of other realities, each one a different sub-set of a larger reality. (This in the same sense that Newtonian gravity is a special case or sub-set of the general law of gravity.) The idea of sub-sets of reality seems to have become somewhat popular (especially among those who have been exposed to the "New Math"). One busy acquaintance tossed this out as a quick definition of what we mean by spirituality: "It is recognizing that reality as we know it is only a sub-set of a greater reality."

In a way this is approached the cosmology of Hermetic mysticism. But not yet encompassed in the theory of altered states is how elements of some other, different reality, to which someone has attained by an altered state of consciousness, can manifest, intrude, and modify our ordinary reality (as in the case of healing and physical phenomena) and be apparent to others whose consciousness has not been altered. As a footnote to this, Joseph Pearce⁵ pointed out that Carlos Castaneda⁶ quite his occult,

psychedelic experiments when elements of different states of consciousness became mixed up and mixed in with ordinary reality.

But Pearce proposed further that, in shifting from one state and one reality to another, it might be possible to stop on dead center, so to speak, and peer through the crack between two different realities. This would be peering into the "void" --behind the scenes, as it were--where there is no structure of manifest reality but only the unmanifest neutral "stuff" that can be formed into any manifest reality, and out of which our ordinary reality could have manifested as one sub-set.

Two further steps could bring this conception into line with Hermetic mystical cosmology. First, that there is a pristine unmanifest reality that is the source and prototype of all manifestation. Second, that the human psyche (in its senses both as mind and life) is permanently and irrevocably linked with that reality--not merely connected with it, nor just part of it, but IT in manifestation. (In the words of the Bhagavad Gita: "That art thou, Arjuna!") A corollary is that in our life and mind we are not only manifesting those pristine forces but also participate in / directing the manifestation of those same forces.

In this way, also, what we perceive and know as mystical, and what we perceive and do as Psi (or occult), are not separable. Like their symbol in the double interlaced triangles of the Star of David, these are reciprocal functions that could not have become intertwined in such a way except by being created that way "in the beginning." They are two aspects of the same thing.

At this point it might be concluded that we have not asked the right question, not a meaningful and answerable question. However, there is still the subject of creativity to deal with.

Creativity: The antithesis of creativity is conformity, in thought as well as action. However, creativity has often been linked with a product--a painting, poem, invention--something that is new, different, and significant. But more recently educators have begun to view creativity as any active, productive mental process including dreams, fantasies, and all serious ideation. To promote such creativity, and to enhance its significance, it must be released (from conformity) rather than be induced.

In the mystical/occult view since the time of Heraclitus, creation and change are everywhere and going on all the time; and it is both constructive and destructive. "You cannot put your foot into the same river twice." Human re-direction of this process into discovery and benefit is the essence of occult/mystical performance. Such discovery is not so much incremental or eclectic as it is discrete quantum jumps of intuition--or of revelation. The knack of discovery, of courting innovation, involves letting go of some fixed or cherished notion so that a

different or more comprehensive one can take its place--just as Kepler, for example, had to forego the hallowed ideal of heavenly circles in order to conceive the orbits of planets as ellipses.

Both Psi (or occultism) and mystical pursuit depend alike on such discovery and serendipity, rather than on each other. As pointed out before, both can be and have been used jointly. Likewise their involvement in creativity is parallel; creativity is characteristic of both rather than a cause/effect of either.

These brief comments on creativity, of course, are not definitive. Their purpose was to see whether ESP might have a cause/effect relationship with creativity that it does not have with mysticism. Apparently it does not; these, too, are related more as cognates than as cause/effect.

Therefore this does not modify the previous conclusion that we have not asked the right question. However, that in itself is not unfortunate. It is understood that this essay question was asked as a teaser, a hypothetical question not to be answered categorical'y but to provoke thinking. (To release creativity? It is unconventional enough to do just that!)

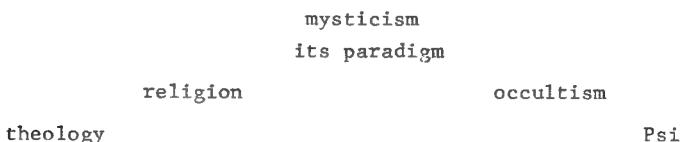
Questions--and Quests: An acknowledged handicap in psychical research is the lack of a comprehensive hypothesis that can be applied and tested in various areas of Psi. Having expanded the concept of ESP and Psi into the larger scope of occultism makes this deficit more formidable. We have instead some scattered concepts as to the mechanisms of several different aspects of Psi, which in turn are only a fringe of the total field.

Moreover, the whole area of Psi is treated as but one aspect of the total human being or human function. Such fractioning is not unique to the area of Psi and psychical research. From other directions we hear about the biological man, the social man, the economic man, the religious or spiritual man, and so on--not as different people but all of them in each of us.

There are cries of distress at such disjointed views of mankind. From one direction, proposals to consider mankind, and especially individual patients or clients, from a holistic view do not bring forward a comprehensive paradigm that could guide such a singular approach. Rather those proposals seem eclectic, that is, they try to integrate existing separate disciplines, which does not really escape their heterogeneity but makes it more complicated. To be a competent holistic practitioner, must one become a sort of Jack-of-all-trades? In one critical area, psychiatrist Gerald May⁷ sees no good in blurring the boundaries between pastoral counseling and psychiatric (behavioral) counseling, nor between their sources in theology and psychology. "It is better," he says, "to walk their rugged interfaces."

Nevertheless the ARPR is a bold move to integrate two fields which in many ways seem related and compatible--if not to conjoin them, at least to explore and expand the interface between them. The hub of their common axis could well be mysticism. Mystical cosmology (especially in some western traditions, such as the Cabalistic) does embody a comprehensive paradigm as to reality and its manifestations, from which we might hope to derive explanations for Psi and for most other human behavior. This has not been done; mystics and mystical students have been more concerned to alter behavior than to explain it. Occultists have tried, with questionable success.

The interrelation among several pertinent fields could be expressed thus:



I have mysticism at the apex because it involves the primary experience of perception as to what's what. Its paradigm, on the one hand, works out into religious practice and theological theory, and on the other hand into practical occultism and Psi.

It might seem that adopting a mystical hypothesis or paradigm would be tantamount to becoming a mystic in purpose and practice, to "go for the big apple," or in quest of the Holy Grail. Rhea White⁸ expressed the dilemma this way: "We are in the position of a minnow who attempts to swallow a whale [piecemeal] in order to understand the inner workings of the huge mammal. A more productive approach would be to let ourselves be swallowed by the whale, trusting that this would not be the end but the beginning."

For various reasons we might not want to do that. In the first place, such "letting go" seems just too risky, too threatening. Another deterrent would be the suspicion that any mystical explanation is a cop-out, an escape from the rigors of rational inquiry, and therefore not compatible with our purpose nor with the rational groundwork that we have nurtured so faithfully. Another objection would be that the hypothesis is presumptive, based more on individual revelation than on coordinated observation. The principle of parsimony would surely be cited. And besides, we would want anyway to continue mapping the territory of Psi--contiguous with what we have already done.

Right at hand we have not exhausted all means to explore some of the mystical implications with respect to Psi. For example, we have hardly begun to probe the role of expectation in producing phenomenal changes, and even in shaping the outcome of scientific experiment, with or without intent. Yet here is a factor that might unravel the mystery that has long been

"occulted" under the old label, faith. Also, ever since the time of Descartes, we have avoided confrontation as to the actual nature of consciousness, probing instead its contents, parameters, correlates--and insisting on correspondences between events in the brain and events in consciousness. Yet consciousness is fundamental in all Psi, and crucial in mystical cosmology.

We might raise again the subject of creativity (which we skimped here) in light of its re-appraisal by educators in connection with learning theory. In so far as learning is discovery, is this not the essence of creativity?

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SOME STUDIES IN THE MYSTICAL QUALITIES OF PSYCHICAL EXPERIENCES
AS REPORTED IN BIBLICAL LITERATURE

By Harris David Erickson

Abstract: Basing his reflections on mystical experiences and their effects as reported in the Bible the author suggests the need for sympathetic study of analogous contemporary experiences by religionists, psychologists, and philosophers.

INTRODUCTION. Too long have scientists limited themselves to data reporting the movement of matter in space. Consequently there has developed a radical bifurcation, however artificial and false it may be, dividing human experience into two incompatible categories. These have been labelled respectively as science, interpreted as perceived factual truth, totally materialistic; and secondly religion, conceived as fantasy and fable. Compounding the situation there were invented such awkward terms as "para-psychology", "extra-sensory", "para-normal", and variations of these.

This paper undertakes to alleviate that division between science and religion. It examines the biblical literature to identify, and, if possible, to interpret the experience of spiritual consciousness with special attention to the experience of prayer. We acknowledge the complexity of such a study. The existing biblical literature has been selected from the reported experiences of human groups from many centuries of various cultures. There are problems of language translation and interpretation. We have serious problems with the subjectivity of our own consciousness. We postulate that consciousness is a phenomenological participation in spiritual realities as energies and values quite beyond measurability by ordinary laboratory means, but understandable as consistent human experience. Prayer, we conceive to be the exercise or control of such energies crudely described as will or desire. Answers, or positive responses, usually come as intuitive insights or impulses in the mind of the "pray-er" or in the minds of others who may be among the "prayed-for".

The Bible, that library of sixty-six books that were selected by the Church Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325, is the distilled essence of the most highly appreciated and treasured literature produced by highly evolved human communities which developed along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. There were about fifty inspired authors. Most of them wrote during a period of about a thousand years. It would be entirely consistent for us to allude to some non-canonical writings as well, insofar as they yield evidence of the evolution of religious and value-based norms.

In researching the Bible to discover principles of spiritual psychology or what we might call "higher levels of consciousness", we have worked mainly with the English language. That, of course, is a handicap, for the books composing the Bible were written many centuries before there was an English language. Meanings and ideas are inevitably distorted and obscured by even the best of translations. Dreams and visions are numerous, usually taken as intuitive insights and counseling the rightness, or warning of wrongness, of proposed lines of action. Signs, miracles, powers, mighty acts, wonders, works, are described as are "gifts", "trance", "revelations". Angels are mentioned at least 286 times in 34 of the 66 books. In this study we undertake to identify and describe the states of consciousness, and if we can, the qualities and powers of mystical experiences to which we may be attributing the title "scientific mysticism".

BIBLICAL NARRATIVES YIELD PERTINENT INSIGHTS. The sentence "God is love" is certainly one of the most profound affirmations to be found in theology, metaphysics, and morality. In practical terms this means that when we sincerely "center down" in positive meditation we are actually participating in the cosmic processes that we call creation. As misunderstood mystics we are in the Academy searching for a new science. This conscious personal exercise of love (agape) is both therapeutic and dynamic, resulting in healing and guidance. What a pity that we don't utilize this resource more. There are many blocks and hindrances but there are many helps and guidelines too. Jesus' farewell conversation with his friends¹ gave positive directions and encouragement. Even without a "teacher" or a "group" one can identify with the "Christ Power" that Jesus promised by saying "I assure you, the one who believes in me will himself do the works that I do and will do greater things than these..."²

We simply do not yet have mechanical instruments, or even descriptive categories into which to classify the nature and intensity of the energies involved in consciousness. But we do experience certain voluntary activities for which we use descriptive terms. Some of these terms, both verbs and nouns, may be usefully examined.³ We will get back to that in a few minutes. But first, let me say something about the audacious notion that a recognized new science shall arise out of these experiences. A large number of well defined sciences include specialized areas. We could cite optometry and archeology, each of which is included in a wider spread of interest in physiology and history respectively. Now, is the Academy searching for a broad spread of a new science encompassing "mysticism, creativity, and psi"? Or are we content to establish in a limited area an adequate array of firm data dealing with narrative references which imply creativity in mystical states of consciousness?

In one of the more controversial books of the biblical canon, the book of Daniel, there is reported at some length and detail a series of most unusual psychical phenomena which took place in the 7th century B.C. The Sumerian culture and various

other developments which had flourished for some millenia in the lush land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers had reached a leveling off stage of sophistication and expansion. The capital city of Babylon is still a rich source of archeological findings in the 20th century A.D. To this great city were brought captives from neighboring lands. One of these captives was Daniel. The young man Daniel became a friend and advisor of Nebuchnezzar, a chief ruler in Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar in the second year of his administration had a disturbing dream. None of the professional psychics in the court could interpret the dream and were therefore threatened with permanent dismissal, namely to be killed.

But Daniel saved the day and the lives of the Chaldean advisors of the royal court. He requested an appointment with the king. His three close friends and fellow captives, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, backed him up as a battery of support. So, Daniel picked up the vibes of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Daniel not only picked up the vibes of the Babylonian monarch and described in detail the dream which had disturbed the unhappy king. Daniel also proceeded to describe the interpretation in full detail. This remarkable achievement of young Daniel, with the prayer-support of his three compatriots, did result in their personal amnesty but did not affect qualitatively the basic character traits of the Babylonian king or his satraps. Daniel himself was honored by the king, but some of his country-men who were appointed to official positions in Babylonia did not strictly observe the ceremonial demonstrations of absolute personal loyalty to the king. Consequently the secret agents accused Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who were then consigned to the fiery furnace. The attendant who put them into the furnace was burned to death, but the three spiritual men were not even scorched. A visible angel was said to be present to nullify the effect of the flames. Whether or not these psychic events are told in exaggerated language, they do in any case bear witness to the prevailing powers of Daniel's intuitive insights interpreting the king's dreams and anticipating the course of events.⁴

DREAMS AS PSYCHIC COMMUNICATION. In the book of Genesis for example, dreams were the standard method for perceiving sublime truth direct from God. Sometimes the perception of the dream was direct and literal. Other times it was symbolic and required interpretation. Some of the earliest reports of the persons whose important dreams were recorded mention Abimelech,⁵ Laban of Syria,⁶ Joseph,⁷ Pharaoh⁸, Pharaoh's personal butler, and his chief baker. It is incidentally recorded that the chief baker was hanged for whatever was the self-incrimination revealed by his own dream. Pharaoh also dreamed symbolically, and Joseph, then in prison at thirty years of age, was called up to interpret the seven fat cows and the seven lean cows then representing the conditions of Pharaoh's administration during fourteen years.

VARIETIES OF PROPHETIC SKILLS. In the book of Numbers, Moses is described as a non-dreamer whose perception of God's truth was always direct and literal, without embellishment by mystic symbolism.⁹ It has been logically inferred¹⁰ that Moses and Elijah were the two Hebrew prophets most highly qualified to experience direct and literal, i.e. non-symbolic, non-metaphorical communication and communion with the Creator God, and that therefore they were the ones whom Jesus summoned to the conference on the Palestinian Mountain.¹¹ The quality of Hebrew prophets after Joseph appears to have deteriorated as chronicled in the later books of Moses.¹² Some of the would-be prophets were passing off their random dreams as authentic divine revelations, or worse, directing the wholesale killing of those they presumed to be enemies.¹³ Thus authentic mystical spirituality became suspect, and even King Saul had to resort to secrecy and camouflage to seek spiritual counsel.¹⁴

After the passage of two and a half to three centuries, there appeared a revival of authentic psychic gifts and dreams, coupled with ideals of righteousness in the experience of people like Joel and Isaiah. Joel was a voice crying in the wilderness with a firm faith that the Creator "will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams and your young men shall see visions ...in those days I will pour out my spirit..."¹⁵

Elijah was not a writing prophet. Nor was he a teacher of fine-honed theoretical morality. But his personal dynamic intensity and his psychic sensitivity resembles that of Moses and of Jesus.¹⁶ Like them he spoke out the mind of God without qualification because he, like them, experienced a literal affinity and personal spiritual fellowship with the Creator.¹⁷ We do not understand why, except for his humanness, he practiced violence in killing hundreds of tribal enemies and sometimes showed other human weaknesses. Excellence of psychic powers is not a guarantee of excellence in moral perception and commitment. These areas of consciousness do not necessarily correlate with each other. One could compare Elijah's piety with that of a contemporary non-moral, or a-moral, or ignorant Christian! He meditated, identifying his conscious mind with the unlimited reserve powers of his Subconscious, but not guaranteeing consistent excellence of moral idealism.

A NEW SCIENCE. This raises a point of difficulty in the Academy's "search for a new science." But it does not answer fundamental questions of ontology. And, of course, there are also flaws and gaps in theological efforts to account for cosmic energies. These hindrances do not necessarily deter us in the search for that new science of consciousness which is both creative and mystical. Most kinds of sciences have evolved over periods of many centuries, and are not yet mature! It is to be expected that the systemization of data about creative consciousness will require many decades of experimentation and observation. We expect that many more books will be written about angels and healings, about visions and conceptualization, about

energies and thoughts. We expect that this Academy will be a major factor in this maturing and re-shaping of ideas and experiences.

"THOUGHTS ARE THINGS". There is a saying that "thoughts are things"; they produce vibrations. Many of the N.T. reports of Jesus' "signs and wonders" indicate that it was his power of thought that influenced the events such as calming a storm. The ancient reports of Elisha's feeding a hundred men have not yet been explained to the satisfaction of the "scientific" community.

Current efforts to formulate definitions of the phenomenon "consciousness" have been blocked by a dogmatic behaviorism which supposes that every movement of matter in space is automatically the result of prior movements of matter in space. This chain-reaction concept of existence is convenient to a great extent in dealing with physical masses. However, it does not to any degree provide any clues to the problem of existence per sé. Some philosophical physicists notably Fritjof Capra in his epical The Turning Point are moving beyond and away from the reductionism of the Cartesian era.

DREAMS AS A FORM OF INTUITIVE PERCEPTION. Robert Young¹ lists 121 uses of the words "dream" and "dreamer." The intention of this word seems clear in these typical cases. "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon men, while they slumber in their beds, then he opens the ears of men, and terrifies them with warnings..." "Being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way." "I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision, I speak with him in a dream." These usages demonstrate a very important avenue of communication. They persuade us to make a case for saying that dreaming is a major form of intuition through which we perceive spiritual truth. The brevity of our present reference to dreams is an acknowledgement that there is an abundance of contemporary psychological literature on the analysis of this phenomenon.

MYSTICISM AND CONSCIOUSNESS. In working toward that "new science" implied in the subject title of this conference we find ourselves wrestling with the word "consciousness." Is it a "substance?", an "energy"? Or is it a mere word, like "beingness" or maybe an array or arrangement of other words than itself, signifying nothing?

There is no acceptable epistemology that does not utilize postulates and/or axioms in the formulation of its hypotheses. So we postulate that our experience of consciousness is indeed a power which not only chooses among many alternatives for action but initiates new lines of action which are in fact creative. Henri Bergson tried to rationalize such a scheme based upon the evolution of the eye.

One of the major forms of Higher Consciousness which we

observe in the literature of the Bible is what we may call enlightened insight or pure intuition. That is very much like what Immanuel Kant has called the Moral Sense. We mean the direct perceptual knowledge of qualitative facts as distinguished from the gross physical material facts. One of the grandest illustrations of this is expressed in the exclamation of the prophet Micah.¹⁴ "He hath shown thee Oh Man what is good." That is to say, Goodness as a moral quality has been revealed to human consciousness through that God-given inner moral sensitivity. And this is a factual perception just as clearly and definitely as your visual perception of the quality of light streaming in from yonder church window. He has shown you, Oh man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" There are hundreds of cases in the Bible reporting such direct, immediate intuitive perception of truth. To research this we would need to look up all the uses in the Bible of words like "Truth", "Knowledge", "Understanding," "Inspiration" and other applicable words to determine which uses of them specifically apply to our subject.

The intuitive nature of the original insight is often overlooked by scholars because follow-up logical reasoning or deduction from historical application of the intuited truth validates and proves the principle. Some people therefore wrongly assume that the proof produced the principle. We call those people "pragmatists." A materialistic pragmatist in this extreme sense is the kind of person who believes, for example, that there is not such a thing as color in a house where blind people live. In that case then of course, for a seeing person to invade the blind man's house and find color there would be extra-sensory. We might even have to call it imaginary, or illusionary, which of course would be denied by any common-sense person equipped with vision. But now we must leave that philosophical argument and get back to our Bible word study.

Joel, the son of Pethu'El, saw visions which were to him the normal perception of moral truth. Such truth is certainly just as definitely real, and the perception of it is as normal as for example the fact that people with normal vision perceive me holding a red book having the dimension of about 6 by 9 inches. And Joel called out¹⁵ "Hear this, you old men, Give ear, all inhabitants of the land! ...Tell your children about it, and let your children tell their children." That was a period in human history when true vision was rather rare. Many of Joel's contemporaries were blind to the truth. But they were the abnormal ones, although a majority; while Joel was the normal one even though, for the time being, he was in the minority. We need hardly add the obvious observation that that was not the first time, nor was it the last time, that a minority was normal while a majority was abnormal. Joel's spiritual perception also caught this word, "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions."¹⁶ The word "vision" in this sense occurs at

least 88 times, 71 in the O.T. and 17 in the N.T. This does not count other words or idioms such as "there appeared", "he saw", and many other expressions referring to vision type experiences.

Luke, the Physician, qualifies as an objective medical reporter. His two books, the Gospel and the Acts, are written for Theophilus after "having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account... that you may know the truth concerning the things of which you have been informed."²² It is a striking fact that in these two books of carefully researched historical reporting, the scientifically oriented Greek physician Luke has more references to visions, angels, and healings than any other Bible writer. We can properly say that Luke is the champion psychic investigator of all the Bible writers. If we check every reference to spiritual guidance, to mystic insight, to higher sense perception, to survival after death, to effective prayer, to spiritual healing, and to any other function of human consciousness which has been labelled "para-normal" or "extra-sensory", there will be almost nothing else left.

There is a telic principle in philosophy. Sometimes it is called the telic drive, or creative purpose. In biology it emerges as a "goal-seeking tendency." Immanuel Kant applied it to moral philosophy by his classic slogan, "I ought implies I can." For Kant the humanitarian moral principles more or less accurately intuited by human insight are as universal and as clearly discernable as any so-called "laws of nature" in the gross materialistic and atomic dimensions of the universe. This same principle is beautifully paraphrased by Edgar Jackson in his book on Understanding prayer.²³ "The built-in qualities of his (man's) consciousness verify the nature of that of which he is conscious. Just as the lungs are meaningless without air, and the eyes without light, so man's spiritual consciousness is meaningless without the objective reality which verifies its nature. The spiritual life is one that believes in its value so much that it acts on its belief and in so doing establishes the validity of its premise. It is an experience that cannot be denied by another although others may fail to achieve it. The man born blind cannot deny the reality of the seeing man's vision, though he himself has not experienced it. The spiritual life is at work to establish personally the evidences of spiritual purpose revealed throughout the cosmic order. If there is plan, pattern, and order everywhere else, I want to be a part of it." In that statement Jackson takes almost an existentialist stance, reminiscent of Kierkegaard or Dostoyevski.

Man is a spiritual consciousness and he does respond to spiritual stimuli just as definitely as the engages in physical action and in physical-intellectual thought processes in response to physical sense stimuli.

When we are studying psychic phenomena reported in the Bible, and the resources for personal spiritual growth, I think we should include the experience we call "prayer." This, in spite of the fact that for many people or even most people, prayer is thought of as a purely intellectual exercise of verbalizing personal wishes and hopes. As Edgar Jackson puts it in a statement that may seem trite, "Organized religion is frequently at fault for allowing people to think that they have found the meaning of prayer in the formal liturgical acts of public worship."²⁴

The experience of clairaudience or hearing the voice of God is referred to about 400 times in the books of the Bible, at least in 48 of the 66 books. Sometimes it is difficult to determine whose voice is referred to by a particular usage. Scholars working as Bible translators and interpreters have all too often passed over the importance of these references. Some occurrences of such words obviously refer to human voices. In some cases a writer could be referring to his own voice of reason as the voice of God because of its compelling logic.

But even with these qualifications, we have some hundreds of Bible references to the voice of God being heard by spiritually sensitive persons. Many of these instances are specifically indicated to have been audible direct voice communication so that by-standers also heard the voice.

We simply can not dismiss these preponderant evidences of true inspiration as if they were some kind of imagined literary device. Jesus' consultation with Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration can not be dismissed as if it were a cleverly staged television hoax.

These things deserve our study by every means that we can use.

1. John 13:16
2. John 14:12
3. See concordance entries for "pray", "prayer", "dream", "vision", "desire", "heal", "faith", etc.
4. Daniel 1
5. Genesis 20:3 ff
6. Genesis 31:24
7. Genesis 37:42
8. Genesis 40: 5ff
9. Numbers 12: 8; Matthew 17
10. T.N. Tiemeyer, Jesus Christ: Super Psychic, Wash., D.C. ES Press, 1977
11. Matthew 17: 1-8
12. Deuteronomy 13: 1-3
13. Deuteronomy 13
14. 1 Sam. 11-15; 28
15. Joel 2: 28-29
16. 1 Kings 19; Mark 9: 2-13; Matthew 17: 1-13; Luke 9: 28-36.
17. I Kings 19

18. Analytic Concordance to the Bible (1880)
19. Micah 6:8; Cf. Job 33: 15-16; Mt. 2:12; Numbers 12: 6
20. Joel 1: 2-3
21. Joel 2: 28
22. Acts 1:1
23. Edgar Jackson, Understanding Prayer N.Y.: World Publ. Co., 1968.
pp. 17-18.
24. Ibid. p. 55

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THE SHROUD OF TURIN:
MYSTICAL VISIONS AND RETROCOGNITION
By Frank C. Tribbe

Abstract: The author addresses the question whether mystical experience can be veridical and hence useful in inquiry. He presents data from the reports of visionaries concerning the Shroud of Turin which suggests that these experiences might be so used.

Retrocognition is a psychic phenomena rarely reported in the annals of psychical research. And that is not because it rarely happens, but because it rarely can be validated. Just as with recitative xenoglossy, the near-impossibility of proving a negative makes the in-depth study of a case of retrocognition hardly worth the candle -- the skeptic's charge is always, "they read it or heard it somewhere, even if they don't remember doing so."

Comparably, until just the last decade, knowledgeable persons as well as the *hoi polloi* assumed that mystical experience came only to those rare ones, the mystics - usually living in a monastery or a cave. Then, on January 26, 1975, the New York Times Magazine carried a long article by Dr. Andrew M. Greeley, a Catholic priest-sociologist, reporting on a survey in which forty-five percent of his American respondents claimed to have had a mystical experience - some more than once. He also noted that experiencers cut across religious and racial lines and tested to have sound mental health at a very high level. Now, admittedly, one might fault Greeley's questionnaire and feel that he was getting a lot of day-dreams and other extraneous feelings and experiences; but the large numbers he reported stopped most experts and critics in their tracks.

Also, nowadays, the mystical, the meditative, and the contemplative modes of the spiritual dimension of humankind are frequently being brought to our attention by the media, by lectures, and by books for the general reader, as facets of our being that can and should be experienced by everyone to heighten our consciousness and develop our potential for enlightenment; and indeed, these experiences are now coming to many ordinary folk.

In any event, members of S.F.F. and this Academy are probably willing to buy Greeley's conclusions even without his statistics. But what is a mystical experience? Perhaps no one has said it better than philosopher William James who,

some eighty years ago, wrote his now classic book, Varieties of Religious Experience. In that volume he gave this seven-part definition: A mystical experience is a transient occurrence in which, without the exercise of will, one has a direct and immediate confrontation with what one believes to be the Ultimate, feels absolute assurance and indescribable elation, and acquires what one believes to be indisputable knowledge and profound understanding, without the employment of any sense perception or of any reasoning faculties.

Apart from the occurrence or frequency of the mystical experience, or whether the experience might happen to 'ordinary' folk, the truly negative, general assumption that continues to be made, even by most authorities, is that the vision of a mystic has no veridical component or quality. It is still assumed, just as it was fifty years ago, that the mystic's vision is at best a case of wish-fulfillment, and at worst an overly-active imagination. Typical of such illustrious, but negative, churchmen was Fr. Herbert Thurston who revised Butler's Lives of the Saints (1926-38); wrote The Physical Phenomena of Mysticism (1952); and a general review of mysticism called Surprising Mystics (H. Regnery, 1955, written by Thurston in 1925). And even when his critics suggested that the visionary phenomena, though doubtless not veridical, and perhaps not meant for the sanctification of the recipient, still could be true charismata, preternatural God-given signs meant for general edification, Thurston's casual response was that when the lives of such people were considered "in the round," as he put it, he was not able to see what edifying purpose the phenomena served.

As to Anne Catherine Emmerich (1774-1824, Westphalia, Germany), Thurston concluded that "it seems impossible to treat the visions...as sources which can contribute reliably to our knowledge of past history," though he grudgingly acknowledged that some obscure local names from the eastern Mediterranean which she meticulously spelled out, proved, upon later validation "that Anne Catherine's strange local knowledge was independent of Brentano" (her amanuensis). Although Thurston finds no value in them, he does report that "the most surprising part of Anne Catherine's revelations... is the extraordinary knowledge she seems to possess of topography and of the social life of the people with whom her contemplations are concerned;" this, in spite of his admission that Brentano had no knowledge of the Holy Land and adjacent areas, and that the mystic was herself uneducated and unread. Also, Thurston quotes a well-known archaeologist, Sir W.M. Ramsay, as saying that the detail and accuracy of her description of approaching Ephesus was not possible except on the basis of actual observation.

Thurston was not only a skeptic as to any value in the visions of mystics, but he was also a skeptic as to the value of the images on the Shroud of Turin. Steadfastly, until his death in 1939, he preferred to believe the charges of Bishops

Henri de Poitiers and Pierre D'Arcis, both of Troyes, France, in the 14th century, who claimed the image was a painted fake, rather than accept the scientific proofs shown him by his contemporaries of the first quarter of this century (specifically, these principally were Secondo Pia, Paul Vignon, Yves Delage, Pierre Barbet).

At the time in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century when Anne Catherine in numerous repeated visions "saw" the Passion of Jesus of Nazareth "played out" for her on the closed-circuit television screen of her mind, no scientist had yet established that the images of the Shroud of Turin had not been painted by an artist or otherwise made by human artifice. If she knew of the Shroud at all, its veridicality could only have been asserted by Church spokesmen and Church historians -- and the latter could only have told her that the Shroud images were said in olden days to be acheiropoietos - not made by human hands. The same is true of two other mystics who recorded descriptions of their repeated visions of Jesus' Passion, e.g., Maria d'Agreda of Spain who lived 1602-1665, and Bridget of Sweden, who lived 1303-1373.

Of the four mystics whose repeated visions of the Passion have been recorded, only Teresa Neumann lived in this century (1898-1962); as to her, of course, there is no way to say with certainty how much she could have learned in Konnersreuth, Bavaria, as one of ten children of a poor tailor, respecting the scientific findings about the Shroud that were then being discussed by scientists in Turin and Paris. However, contamination of her account by prior knowledge seems most unlikely, since it was dictated to Fathers Witt and Naber in 1926, soon after her visions began and was not altered after Witt's publication. Needless to say, all four of these mystics had repeated, detailed visions of Jesus' Passion, each of them recorded her experience, all four are in remarkable agreement with one another, and their accounts are amazingly consistent with recent Shroud of Turin data.

So, let us look at eight facets of the Passion of Jesus of Nazareth that these four mystics viewed repeatedly and intimately and in detail. As to each item we will check with the Shroud of Turin data -- which data has been available only for the past eighty years -- and which was available barely beyond a small group of scholars, until the past fifteen years. Also, some of the most crucial data, as to this paper, has been available for just six years or less.

1. The oriental crown, called a "miter." The Gospels said a "crown of thorns" but all artists of the past 950 years have shown a circlet, which is the form of the European crowns, based on the wreath of laurel leaves with which the

Greeks honored their heros. But, Jerusalem was not in the occident; it was in the orient, and the mitercrown of the oriental kings was a cross between a skull-cap and a lady's pill-box hat of a few years ago; although, the miter might be quite high and ornate, much like the formal hat of some bishops today, which was patterned after the crowns of Byzantine monarchs. Until Dr. Pierre Barbet's book, A Doctor At Calvary, was translated in the 1950s and 1960s, this bit of scholarship was undiscovered. Barbet explained that the Man of the Shroud had puncture wounds over his entire scalp. But the mystics knew! Bridget of Sweden wrote: "The crown tore the whole of the head of Jesus." Teresa Neumann of Bavaria said: "The crown of thorns which is now ready, is placed on Our Lord's head like a helmet; it is not just a crown as we see it depicted in our pictures. One of the soldiers presses the crown of thorns firmly on His head. The blood flows down His whole face, which shows signs of intense pain during this terrible treatment." This is a point that the Shroud has taught us, that was not to be found in the Bible or in religious history.

2. Nails through the wrists, not the palms. Again, we have Barbet to thank for this knowledge. Not only did careful observation and measurement demonstrate that the Man of the Shroud was nailed through the wrists, but Barbet, as an anatomy professor, was able to obtain fresh cadavers for his careful experiments. His reconstruction of crucifixion technique demonstrated repeatedly that a nail through the palm's soft flesh would tear out in minutes from the weight of the victim's body. Moreover, he explained that the square Roman spikes could easily be accommodated by the square space in the wrist, called the "space of Destot" - named for an earlier Frenchman. And the apparent anomaly was easily resolved, as simply a bad guess in 1611 by King James' translators; the New Testament Greek says, "c-h-e-i-r" -- but in English it can mean hand, wrist or forearm. The mystics were not fooled, however, as Bridget and Teresa both made clear. Bridget says "they transfixed His hand in the part where the bone is firmest."

3. Stretching the body. One weakness that critics have found in Barbet's otherwise masterful evaluation of the medical aspects of the Shroud of Turin, concerns the question of body sag and the angle of the arms as the blood ran from wrist to shoulder and dripped off along the way. Also, some critics claim the forearms and hands of the Man of the Shroud are preternaturally long. But all four of the mystics explain this situation with lurid details -- very simply, they saw the soldiers cruelly stretch Jesus' body, dislocating his joints in the process. All four of them report that his body was laid on the cross to mark where the nails would go, and then holes were bored in the beams to make driving the nails easier. Additionally, they explain that the soldiers purposely set the nail-holes

much beyond the location marked by his body, and that they stretched him with ropes until the nails reached the holes.

4. A single nail for the feet. The Romans used many styles of crosses and many techniques of crucifixion. Since crucifixion was outlawed by Constantine about the year 312, when Byzantine religious art began to flower no one knew the details of crucifixion. Accordingly, it was common for Jesus' crucifixion to be shown with a nail in each foot. However, long before photography and microscopes and medical experts to evaluate the Shroud of Turin data, the mystics knew that Jesus' feet were spiked with a single nail, and the left foot was over the right. Anne Catherine, Teresa and Bridget all saw it this way. Rigor mortis froze the muscles of the Man of the Shroud before he was taken from the cross; also, the body images on the Shroud are like a straight-on photograph. Therefore, it is but natural that the left leg, frozen with the knee bent, is apparently about two inches shorter than the right. The Byzantines could observe this, too, but they couldn't understand it -- so among the eastern Orthodox churches there was the legend that Jesus was a cripple.

5. Heel cavity and a block for the instep. Another part of the criticism of Barbet was that a single nail through both feet would force the raising of the right knee. But Barbet knew what he saw on the Shroud image! It takes the written accounts of the mystics to rationalize the statements of Barbet and his critics. Anne Catherine saw a hole chiseled into the upright of the cross to accommodate the heel of Jesus' right foot. Both she and Teresa saw a small block of wood (with a hole bored in it) placed under the right instep. In this fashion the nail could be driven through both feet with solid support, and the right knee would stay against the upright. Nevertheless, those visions did seem a bit far-fetched until the year 1968. In Jerusalem a first century burial ossuary was opened in 1968, clearly marked as containing the bones of one, Jehohanan -- and Jehohanan had been crucified -- and there was a nail through the bones of both his feet that was found to still impale a small block of acacia wood, and the tip of the nail still was covered by a bit of olive wood, which had doubtless been the upright of his cross. Obviously, Jehohanan's feet were forcefully torn from the cross, since time or consideration was lacking.

6. Rigor mortis. The Shroud scientists have noted a large number of clear signs of the onset of postmortem rigor of the muscles of the Man of the Shroud, while he was still on the cross. These include the rigor of the shoulder girdle which, just as clearly, Nicodemus and Joseph had had to break (just like any modern mortician) in order to position the arms across the abdomen. The overly contracted abdominal muscles, frozen in rigor, pointed to a usual crucifixion death by asphyxiation,

while the bent left knee and the extended foot arches continue to point to a death while on the cross. Also, the blood separation data matches the Bible story of the flow of "blood and water." The sindonologists also note that the mouth was closed by a chin-band and the eyelids were closed by coins, but those data do not by themselves tell the time of death. However, at this point Bridget of Sweden, in the mid-fourteenth century, "saw" that the eyes and mouth of Jesus were open in death as the body was taken from the cross - confirming Bible and sindonologists.

7. The lance thrust. Crucifixion death was a slow death; its lack of merciful suddenness was one reason the Romans favored it. The extreme form and ritual of Judaism could not be understood by the Romans, but as practical administrators they knew it best to give-in on small points, and so they ensured that crucifixion victims died before the beginning of holy days -- they simply broke the victim's legs to preclude their pushing-up for breath, and thus accelerated asphyxiation. After breaking the shins of the two thieves, the soldiers saw that Jesus was already dead and did not swing their clubs at his legs. But the Gospel of John says that one soldier drew a sword and pierced Jesus' side. The sindonologists say that the right side of the Man of the Shroud was pierced by a small, oval blade, such as the side-arm carried by a senior Roman officer, perhaps a centurion. But why should he do this when Jesus was already dead? Did he doubt the obvious signs of death, or was he just a vicious lout, even though the Gospels have the centurion at the cross saying, "Surely, this was a just man?" No, the exhaustive research on crucifixion published by Fr. Holzmeister in 1934 (Verbum Domini of the Pontifical Biblical Institute), indicates that this action was probably a routine coup-de-grace administered in anticipation of the request to Pilate for the body that was made by Joseph of Arimathea. Holzmeister points out that the centurion would have seen the huddled group of close relatives and friends, dominated by Mary, and would have known the Roman preference for releasing the body to the family after execution - refusal for cause being an exception. And so, he administered the coup-de-grace as he was required to do before releasing a prisoner's body. In such circumstances the discussion among sindonologists as to whether the blade entered the heart seems moot. Because, considering the purpose of the blow and the professionalism of the soldier, we may be sure that he knew where and how to find the heart with his blade, and would have done so.

At this point the mystics enter the picture, and two of them (Anne Catherine and Teresa) tell us that the blade entered the side of Jesus' chest, slightly toward the front, just as Shroud medical experts have calculated it for the Man of the Shroud. However, these two mystics go

further and say that they saw the point of the blade emerged on the other side, slightly to the rear. Although Shroud researchers have not deemed it significant, there is indeed a small wound on the left side of the dorsal (back) image of the Man of the Shroud, at the exact point where the two mystics saw the tip emerge. Critics of the mystics ridicule their accounts on this detail, saying that obviously the thrust of the blade would be upward, not across the chest. Clearly they have been looking at religious art showing Jesus on a high cross. However, historians now know that the Romans did not use high crosses. Wood was scarce and they didn't care for the unnecessary extra work. So the feet of a crucified man were no more than a foot or foot-and-a-half off the ground. Thus, the centurion's blade would have been thrust straight out from the shoulder, doubtless penetrating Jesus on substantially a horizontal line.

8. Scourges tipped with metal. One of the first things that photography and magnification told twentieth century sindonologists was that the Man of the Shroud was scourged with whips that were tipped with barbell-shaped pieces of metal. Historians quickly identified these as Roman flagra. Of our four mystics, Bridget of Sweden noticed this particularly, and she reported that "his whole body was lacerated with scourges tipped with sharp points (which) ... ploughed up (the flesh)." Teresa Neumann described how "the skin first swells up, and is then torn; the blood flows." Anne Catherine tells us that they "tore His flesh to pieces; His blood spouted.. they used scourges...which penetrated to the bone and tore off pieces of flesh at every blow."

Some critics point to the discrepancy between the Shroud marks of a wrist impalement and the mystics' stigmata marks in the palm. My feeling is that stigmata phenomena are partially psychological, and when Shroud data become better known, and perhaps new Bible versions correct the translation, more stigmatists will have them in the wrist. Father Otterbein of the Holy Shroud Guild tells me there already are two cases of the latter, one in Canada. Teresa Neumann said: "Do not think that Our Savior was nailed in the hands, where I have my stigmata. These marks have only a mystical meaning. Jesus must have been fixed more firmly on the Cross."

So, we can see that meticulous detail was furnished us about Jesus' passion by these mystics, in some instances hundreds of years before Shroud of Turin data or historical and religious information was available. On such basis, I suggest that these were true and validated cases of retrocognition. These accounts could not be memories of prior knowledge. Also, we can be sure it is not

sensible to suggest "simple" clairvoyance of the Shroud itself since it lay somewhere in a chest, either folded many times or rolled, so that the photographically negative images would be impossible to decipher even with x-ray sight. Finally, it must be noted that these mystics lived through, saw and heard every event and detail of the Passion, via box-seats, not from the grandstand or bleachers. Thus, even details of their accounts which still cannot be validated from the Shroud or other knowledge must now be taken seriously.

Yes, mystical experience can be veridical. These were.

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MYSTICAL AND THE ARTISTIC

by Grace Adolphsen Brame

Abstract: The Mystical Path, from its beginning in awakening, through purification, illumination, the "dark night of the soul" union, may be expressed in artistic terms or through the artist's life, where life can be viewed as the supreme work of art. Mystical experience is often the well-spring from which the greatest art is born. Art, in turn, has been the path to the mystical, both for artists and for those involved in a work of art. At its best, Art is a means of infusing goodness, truth, and beauty in those who behold it.

If someone asked for my personal definition of mysticism today, my response would be: "It is, to me, the experience of a unifying Ultimate Reality which pervades and transcends all that is."

And if my questioner would ask for my definition of art, I would reply: "Art is the conception and the expression of that Ultimate Reality. It is the picturing (within and outside of the mind), the sharing, and the transmitting of the ultimately Real." One cannot express what is not first inwardly experienced and then conceived; and there is not art if it is only experienced and conceived, but not expressed, not shared, or communicated.

The Chinese I Ching speaks of "the invisible sound that moves all hearts and draws them together," mystifying humankind. (IC 68,9) Surely it is this "invisible sound that moves all hearts and draws them together" from which heard music comes. The music of the soul becomes the music of the mind, and then of the voice or fingertips; eventually, it becomes music to another eardrum and to another soul. Perhaps, at some point, not only the artist, but the listener, too, will hear the original, invisible, inaudible sound, that which the East calls "the sound of one hand clapping." (TH 29) The mystical Source provides the music, and the music returns us to the Source.

Zen Buddhism speaks of this Reality behind manifestation. Zen calls it "prior-to-form." It is the well of limitless Reality from which all things of form have come and which all things express. It gives meaning to manifestation. As such, it is the basic art. That which is "prior to form" is the true being of all that has form. Thus, when a painter is "awakened," it is his Real Self that he paints. For Zen, art is the instrument of transcendence of the ordinary, but more than that, it reveals the transcendent as the ordinary. (T1 15,6 & ZA 12, 3)

Speaking anthropomorphically, theists might say: "God, the Prime Artist, dreamed Creation, the One Great Work of Art." As God's creature, the human being's own creativity is a micro-cosmic expression of that Creation from which all things come

Stravinsky, in writing his Poetics of Music, said:

The foretaste of the creative act accompanies the intuitive grasp of an unknown entity already possessed but not yet intelligible." (PM 52)
(italics mine)

Puccini, in speaking of making a masterpiece, called it "a thing which must be alive before it can be born." (WC 449)

Art proceeds from spirit. Oswald Spengler once wrote: "Art is soul become form." (DFW) Salvador de Madariaga echoed: "Art is the conveyance of spirit by means of matter." (AB)

I have been much moved by a prayer of Teilhard de Chardin who, in The Divine Milieu, implored: "...lay hold on me fully, both by the Within and the Without of myself, grant that I may never break this double thread of my life."

But we have broken it. Carl Jung, observing our emphasis upon the outer, has said:

The inner correspondence with the outer god-image is undeveloped....Too few people have experienced the divine image as the innermost possession of their own souls. Christ only meets them from without, never from within the soul." (PA, 4J 6)

W.H. Auden, however, saw the problem from the other side. Writing the preface to Dag Hammarskjold's Markings, he said:

The great temptation of the contemplative life...is some form or other of Quietism, an indifference to and impatience with, not only "works"...but also all the institutional and intellectual aspects of human life...."Worldly" (temptations), because they are much easier to recognize, are less dangerous." (M xxxi)

The only way the "double thread" can be kept unbroken in the life of the artist and the life of the art lover is to keep the awareness of art as the expression and servant of spirit clearly within us, enabling these two, as one, to be the spirit's "grace."

Jacob Boehme, that great 16th-17th Century Lutheran mystic, held that "the signature of all things" was basic to life. The Eternal, he believed, is expressed in the internal, and the internal in the external, and this is true throughout all creation and in all creativity. (SAT 91, 162 & DC 220, 1)

I have heard Paul Tillich say that art is symbolic form which enables an experience of the reality which it describes. Surely this is true. Art points beyond itself. It functions

as an arrow, taking us to an expanded awareness. It functions as a door, an entrance into another consciousness, and as an opening to the Eternal and the Real.

Art points to the Great Reality, but it cannot be a cage in which the Great Reality may be placed. There will always be those who read the text of a myth, or hear the words of a poem, or see an impression painted on a canvas who will perceive that artistic expression as a definition, as a creedal reduction in non-verbal form, as boxed-in truth which will never be more than it appears to be. But art is a re-enactment of truth. It is many-layered and multi-dimensional. It is a hermeneutic, an interpretation, and a way of contact with "that which passes understanding." (Phil. 4:7) It was Freud's young follower, Otto Rank, who saw art as "a picture of the soul" and who therefore saw its therapeutic value in its "open-ended" quality.

Many have asked us to see art as a mere reflection of the mind or of the times, but those who see it thus have missed its mission and its meaning. Leo Tolstoy, an artist of letters and a reformer of society, in his almost forgotten treatise entitled: What Is Art? submitted that art is not just an expression of beauty, but that for a Russian, beauty cannot be found except as a component of goodness. (WA 149) Some fifty years later, another Russian, then in America, added: "Art is by essence constructive...art is the contrary of chaos." (PM 12,3) His name was Stravinsky.

But Tolstoy had more to say. Art, he declared, "infects" the perceiver, the recipient, with its qualities. That which the artist "has", the art lover "gets" as well. It moves inside, under the skin, into the consciousness of another, and that person's being is consequently changed by the "infection." (WA 181)

This "infection" process we call communication. True communication is a resounding or a re-sounding in one being of that which "sounds" in another. It is a vibration on the same frequency. And this can happen because, coming from the same Source, we reverberate sympathetically at our depths.

Cyril Scott, the Twentieth Century English composer who wrote Music, Its Secret Influence Through the Ages, has challenged us to accept that the art of music is so influential that "the essence of musical form tends to reproduce itself in human conduct ...As in music, so in life," he contends. He argues that an innovation in musical style has invariably been followed by innovation in politics and morals. (MSI 40) He states:

The inspired composer...is he who through the medium of musical vibration and expression helps to mold the characteristics of the future. (MSI 28)

Scott has taken the truth of the influence of art and stretched it further than most would care to do, yet there are scores of testimonies to the influence of art in creating the mystical experience. People have been elevated, transported, and changed for life by the mystical-artistic experience. The recounting of one such transformation takes up almost the whole of the book, The Timeless Moment, by H. Warner Allen. Allen wrote of listening to Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in A Major and closing his eyes to see a luminous silver glow which became a tunnel of light proceeding from "Some distant sun in the heart of the self." He said:

Swiftly and smoothly I was borne through the tunnel, and as I went, the light turned from silver to gold. There was an impression of drawing strength from a limitless sea of power and a sense of deepening peace. The light grew brighter but never dazzling or alarming. I came to a point where time and motion ceased...

Then, unwittingly changing to the present tense, he wrote:

I am absorbed in the light of the Universe, in Reality glowing like fire with the knowledge of itself, without ceasing to be one and myself, merging like a drop of quicksilver in the whole, yet still separate as a grain of sand in the desert..."

D. Scott Rogo, writing later of Allen's experience, says:

At this point, Allen was overcome by a deep peace and for a moment he seemed to understand the riddle of life and the Universe. He realized that death was an illusion and that "I am not 'I', not the 'I' I thought."

Remarkably, Allen returned to consciousness to discover that the music was almost in the exact spot as it had been when he had entered mystical consciousness. He recounted:

The swiftly flowing continuity of the music was not interrupted, so that what Mr. T.S. Eliot called 'the intersection of the timeless moment' must have slipped into the interval between two demi-semi quavers (which we would call thirty-second second notes, a fraction of a second in time).

Rogo reports:

Allen...felt that the ecstasy and the music were intrinsically related and believed that the union within himself was caused by the union between the

"rhythmic emotion" of the music and his own inner tranquility. (MM 28)

Art can generate the mystical experience; and the mystical experience can generate art. Handel, witnessing to his writing of the "Hallelujah Chorus," sounded like a combination of the John who wrote Revelation and St. Paul in his "out-of-body" experience. He testified:

I think I did see all Heaven before me--and the great God himself.. Whether I was in my body or out of my body as I wrote it, I know not. God knows." (WC 73 & II Cor. 12:2)

Brahms maintained that:

only when the creative artist is receptive to (the One Supreme) Spirit can and does that artist write immortal works. (MSI 28)

Those who know Sufism well are aware of the tremendous importance of Islamic art as the instrument of the Divine. The great poet, Jalāluddin Rumi, in establishing what we call "The Whirling Dervishes" set meditation to music and dance. Pir Vilayet Inayet Khan, the well-known Sufi teacher now in Arizona, is a superb cellist of professional quality, and is the son of a notable spiritual leader and musician. In the father's book on music, there is a description of a Hindu singer tuning his tambura before singing. For a long time he plays one chord over and over, "and while he tunes his tambura, he tunes his own soul." (M 33) The audience, aware of what the musician is doing, waits patiently, some perhaps "tuning their souls," as well.

That learned ability to "tune the soul" has brought peace in the midst of pain, and joy into the very heart of sorrow. One hears stories of the effect of an orchestra in a concentration camp, or of a song at the bedside of a sick or dying patient; or of a spiritual chant recited by slaves toiling long and painful hours under a burning sun.

Mysticism is, perhaps, a "calling back" of the external to the internal, and of the internal to the Eternal; and art is a way of expressing and sharing that happening.

The word, "inspiration," means "to breath into," and, etymologically, we have been told, it originated in the idea of God breathing into the soul. The second chapter of Genesis tells us that human life was first given, not simply by providing a body, nor by furnishing a surrounding atmosphere of nitrogen and oxygen, but by God "breathing the breath of life" into the nostrils of the first human being. I do not see this as something akin to resuscitation or "priming the pump," but rather as a way of saying that all life is God's life, and that God has given life by giving himself to his creature. How else could the otherwise inanimate become a living being, except to gain its life from the Source of life?

The other Hebrew Creation myth relates that God spoke the world into being, and the New Testament Gospel of John reinforces it:

In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. (John 1:1,3)

These Hebrew and Christian scriptures are not alone in their emphasis. The Vedas say that the cosmos was created through sound. Khan says that the human being "has come from vibrations and he himself is vibration"; therefore, music is his nature. (M 41) Khan sees these vibrations as a sort of cosmic music, and says:

By music the world was created, and by music (the world is drawn) again into the source which has created it." (M 5)

Hindu philosophy of the Word says that:

if all the particularities which distinguish one word from another (are) removed, then what remains will be the 'Sound-Brahman'"

that is, the sound or vibration of God. (VWW 152)

Zen Buddhism does not speak of God's vibrations or of the music of Creation, for Zen has no God, no "other." It speaks of the Selfless Self and of the time-bound ego which must be surpassed in order for the selfless to be actualized. It is interesting that the seven qualities of that Selfless Self are also the seven qualities of Zen art. The qualities of one are the qualities of the other. For Zen, the bottomless, limitless, and undifferentiated Self is expressed in the art of nature, the art which we call "art," and the art of living.

The Jewish psychologist Otto Rank, Tolstoy, and a number of others had this understanding of life as art. In Art and Artists Rank wrote:

The creative artistic personality is ...the first work of the productive individual, and it remains fundamentally his chief work, since all his other works are partly the repeated expression of this primal creation. (DRP 132)

Rank believed that the primordial hero is the prototype of "the new ...human being" whose greatest work of art is "his own life." (DRP 251,2)

It is possible to compose a list of the properties of art and compare them to qualities of life to see what Rank meant

It turns out to be very simple. If life is lived as art would it not contain purpose, meaning, balance, form, expression, beauty, and goodness?

Elbert Hubbard wrote in his Epigrams: "Art is not a thing; it is a way." We might add: "So is mysticism." Mysticism has always been seen as a path. Some give it three steps, some five. Evelyn Underhill divides the mystical path into Awakening, Purgation, Illumination, the Dark Night of the Soul, and Union. Each one of these has its counterpart in the artistic life.

Mystical awakening to the Great Reality can be compared to the first awareness of the artistic sense which may or may not yet realize the Source from which it comes, yet recognizes within it something which leads it to the highest and best which it can know and express. Purgation's cleansing, letting go, and dying to self (of which I have spoken in my first book) is echoed in the discipline and sacrifice of the artistic life, a sacrifice which is not only giving up but giving; a sacrifice involving not only pain but joy, not only letting go, but adding on; not only dying, but being born. The greatest art is accomplished only when the self as servant has become selfless and thus transformed and transforming. It is a path through death to life which can be very real to an artist.

The Illuminative experience of discovering God in all things as well as within and through oneself or as one's Self, is known by the artist in becoming an instrument of the divine. At those rare moments when this occurs, the artist finds in tone and phrase, color and texture, form and dynamic, the expression and portrait of that which is described.

No artistic life is without the experience of the Dark Night of the Soul when inspiration (the breath of God) has fled and grace has apparently vanished. The physical instrument may be damaged. There may be no demand for one's talents. Those who witness the art may not understand it or may reject it. The affirmative awareness of one's inherent gift may disappear. The well springs of creativity may dry up. At such a time the Indian poet, Tagore, inscribed:

The song that I came to sing remains unsung to this day. I have spent my days in stringing and unstringing my instrument. The time has not come true, the words have not been rightly set; only there is the agony of wishing in my heart.

Yet that Dark Night is apparently essential, since it winnows from the artist's life all but the most basic and most valid. In the moment when that and only that validity is real and realized, the artist becomes God's chalice, God's expression, and lives "in God." Then the artist can truly say: "In Him we live," and create, "and have our being." (Acts 17:28)

The unity which thus ensues is not only of the artist

creature and the Artist Creator, but of all those who participate in the art. Stravinsky once wrote:

The profound meaning of music (and he could have said: "Of all the arts,") and its essential aim... is to promote a communion of man with his fellow man and with the Supreme Being. (PM 21)

I have stood before many audiences to sing and felt that it was God who really sang, and God who listened as each member of the audience, and God who flowed back in blessing from that audience. This is God known as a circulation: vibrating, flowing, moving simultaneously in all-all giving, all receiving.

Singing concerts for those who are called my "enemies" in the Soviet Union, I have known another "union" spoken through the eyes of the audience as I sang and realized through their gifts of words and flowers as I ended many of my songs. Here at home, I have seen cancerous people who have been withdrawn in pain, experience the breaking of a crisis with the use of what I call "Receptive Prayer" and song. Held in the music of the meditation, I have watched their bodies come to rest and their minds become rational, peaceful, expectant: embracing a great uniting which was to come.

The words of a song may express it best of all: "Blow, blow, blow 'til we be but Breath of the Spirit in thee and me." (SG adapt.)

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NON-PHYSICALITY AND MEANING IN PARAPSYCHOLOGY:

To Teach An Old Science New Tricks

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Abstract: After relating some facts regarding J.B. and Louisa Rhine's interest in and conception of method in parapsychology, the author explores the feasibility of appropriating some epistemological aspects of the "soft sciences" and the humanities for use in parapsychology.

Introduction. When I first received notice of this conference I reacted somewhat strongly to the subtitle "A Search for A New Science". I suffer from an untutored prejudice that science is equal to most tasks put before it. While I know this borders on scientism, I don't think that I idealize the level of understanding that normal science has shown regarding the ineffable, the mystical, the creative or the paranormal. On the other hand, the fault doesn't necessarily lie with science herself. The problem is largely one of tunnel vision; we tend to talk and work as if there were only one science, "hard" science. This habit de-values the conventional soft sciences. The research traditions of the humanities suffer even more.

I have often wondered why "scholarly" behavior in the humanities is not considered comparable to "empirical" behaviour in the sciences. With the exception of laboratory manipulation the processes are very much the same. But because our common understanding of science is a limited one the specific subset of laboratory behavior is valued more highly than virtually any other empirical behavior.

In a paper which addressed the demarcation problem, Mario Bunge talks about cognitive fields, i.e., spheres of human activity designed to obtain, disseminate and use knowledge in meaningful ways.¹ Bunge divides these cognitive fields into two categories "research fields" and "belief fields". These categories delineate, to Bunge, two distinctly different forms of cognitive activity.² The research fields are: formal science; basic science; the applied sciences; technology; and the humanities. Bunge classifies religion, political ideologies, pseudosciences and pseudo-technologies as "belief" fields.

Workers in the research fields observe, test, and reference previously accumulated knowledge, and attempt to discover lawfulness. Participants in belief fields may operate on received knowledge or inspiration, or may employ various scientific methodologies for the purpose of justifying certain presuppositions or beliefs. This latter statement, in part, defines pseudoscience.

If we accept Bunge's classification we are compelled to admit that psychical research and parapsychology have both stepped over the line into pseudoscience on occasion. In our defense may I say that it is not easy to address the interface of religion and psychical research, or the "religious" issue of nonphysicality without treading perilously close to Bunge's line of demarcation.

On the other hand, Bunge included the humanities in his list of research fields. As many anthropologists, sociologists, psychoanalysts and historians know only too well the club of science does not often extend its invitation to these softest of the soft sciences. Bunge, however, seems to think that disciplines that test hypotheses by observation, that describe the observed as carefully as possible, and that attempt to offer the most-well-supported generalizations, even though not laboratory sciences, are in some sense science too.

To digress a moment, let me relate a conversation I had recently with a venerable member of this Academy. This particular gentleman worked at Rhine's laboratory when he was my age. Upon hearing that I had submitted an abstract for this meeting he cornered me, wagged a cautionary finger and said: "Now, remember you are going to talk to the Academy. Please, don't be too Rhinean." I laughed. Because he was teasing me. Except that he wasn't really teasing me.

In psychical research, in experimental parapsychology, to be Rhinean means to be as "hard" science as possible. J.B. Rhine was our most thorough-going empiricist, a man who stepped into the individualistic arena of psychic science with its varied and sometimes antagonistic research programs and forged one pretty traditional-looking science. Rhine took our greater questions and reduced them -- some say ad absurdum. He systematically developed a simplistic methodology that seemed to work. He standardized terminology on the basis of his operationalisms and his generalizations. He revolutionized our field. But like most hard scientists who decry the soft approaches, Rhine developed a methodology that both ignored and devalued the subjectivity of the paranormal.

Before we embark on a complete recasting of science perhaps we should examine the interplay of Rhine's purposes -- which were inherently religious -- and Rhine's methods -- which were defiantly mechanistic -- so as to determine why we are left so unsatisfied.

The Science of the Nonphysical. First, let me state the "bottom line" on J.B. Rhine by quoting Laurie Huff's excellent paper, "J.B. Rhine and Parapsychology: A Human Quest",

"...Philosophers of science--Karl Popper, Thomas Kuhn, Michael Polanyi, Paul Feyeraband, and others--willing to turn their critical powers upon their own academic endeavors -- have shown us (in a variety of

highly individual ways) ... [that] ... science must be recognized as a fundamentally human undertaking, one marked alike by bursts of creative insight and credulous folly, by dogged pursuit of knowledge and equally stubborn preservation of unexamined presuppositions, by heroic dedication and all-too-human fallibility.

Nor is science any less human when practised by its geniuses and pioneers; in fact, the work of these individuals often provides particularly eloquent testimony on behalf of the personal nature of scientific investigation. But one can admire the efforts of an outstanding researcher, the bearer of the metaphorical torch, not because the person's steps were firm and sure (as they seldom or never are), but because they were made in the first place."³

It is apparent in Huff's paper that, even when she is being critical, she has a deep respect for J.B. Rhine, whatever human failures she may subsequently identify. Her respect is tempered by an understanding of the magnitude of his contribution to American parapsychology and of the greatness of his spirit.

On the one hand, I share that deep respect most wholeheartedly. On the other hand, like Huff, I am not wholly comfortable with Rhine's emphatic claim to have proven the operation of something nonphysical in man, something that could obtain information and influence the physical world without any conceivable physical contact. This proof, for Rhine, seemed to be an undeniable proof of a soul.

Both J. B. and L.E. Rhine came from fundamentalist religious backgrounds. J.B., brought up in a variety of fundamentalist Christian sects, was set for a time on a course towards the Methodist ministry. Louisa's family were Mennonite, and although she never adopted "the garb", her views on religion, particularly on the varieties of Christianity besides her own, were very much influenced by her early training.⁴

J.B. and Louisa became neighbors in young adulthood. Because their minds were of a more serious cast than their peers, they occupied a great deal of each other's time with an arguing out of their differing religious beliefs.⁵ Eventually, as their lives became inextricably intertwined, they formed a tandem understanding of the spiritual in life, an understanding very much the result of a mutual hammering at ultimate questions.^{6,7}

In later years J.B. was likely to talk about nonphysicality and the relationship of religion to parapsychology as if the data accumulated through years of card tests and dice throws, of hundreds of case histories, had forced him to adopt his belief. It is obvious from their writings that both Rhines felt this to be true.⁸

However, whether they wanted to admit it or not, these ideas arose very early on and did not change much over the course of their lives. In 1916, 11 years before they came to Duke, 18 years before Rhine was to maintain that his data forced him to something of a spiritual conclusion, he wrote this to Louisa:

"... I hate the word 'mechanistic'. If G-d does not, has not, and will not perform anything out of the natural order of things, if He does not answer prayer, if Christ did not perform the miracles, real miracles, come from G-d and ascend to heaven, if there is no "love of Jesus" to preach, I may as well be... a fatalist, a cynic. But I believe they are true and I am going to prove to my reason the things that I feel." ... [author's emphasis]⁹

The Rhines' identified for themselves, in a series of discussions which began in adolescence and continued throughout their lives, a central core of beliefs upon which they felt all religions and practices were founded:

"..The basic question for any religion is whether there is a spiritual factor in man. Without a positive answer to this question there would probably be nothing that could rightly be called a religion.... It means... something subject to principles that lie beyond the physical system of nature."¹⁰

This basic core centered around the theological concept of the soul. To determine whether some objective reality had given rise to this concept Rhine narrowed the theological idea to the "limited soul hypothesis"¹¹. This hypothesis postulated: that an aspect of man existed which operated in a universe not bound by physical laws (therefore a non-physical universe); that the abilities the soul would need to survive death, to communicate with the living, to influence the physical world after death must also be available to some extent in the living man; and that evidence to support the hypothesis should be found in properly conducted laboratory experiments testing telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, and psychokinesis.

The methodology, impressed into service, after many lines were tried and abandoned, the data of which were used to address ultimate religious questions, was that of card-guessing and dice-throwing, and to a lesser extent experimental precursors of what is now known as free-response.

The paradox resides here. Huff said:

"...It is immediately clear that Rhine's work cannot be separated from his personal and philosophical concerns. His writings show an interest not merely in the "evidence", but in its wider

meaning, its metaphysical implications. The same sorts of questions that must have originally impelled him toward the ministry were to remain with him throughout his adult life...questions [that] focused on the ultimate, [the] profound ... mysteries of life. He wished to know nothing less than the true nature of human beings and their relation to the universe."¹²

The Uneasy Peace. To discern this relationship Rhine mobilized a passionate devotion to the scientific method. He felt that he could "beat behaviorism at its own game ... showing that anti-behaviourist conclusions could be arrived at on the basis of impeccably objectivist data."¹³ Rhine was so sure as he gathered his data that he had proved his point that he ceased to merely suggest that the theory of nonphysicality pointed to a spiritual side to man. He ceased to couch his statements in philosophically conservative or cautiously scientific language. Instead he talked loud, long, and decisively about his beliefs. Perhaps one of his strongest statements was:

"...The conclusion is inescapable that there is something operative in man that transcends the laws of matter and, therefore, by definition, a nonphysical or spiritual law is made manifest. The universe, therefore ... is one about which it is possible to be religious; possible, at least, if the minimal requirement of religion is to be a philosophy of man's place in the universe based on the operation of spiritual forces."¹⁴

But did Rhine understand religion in the sense that it is commonly understood? Did he understand either the nature or purpose of science as it was practised by his contemporaries, as we practice it today?

To borrow from Huff for one last time:

"Rhine's version of science ... was indistinguishable from the "mechanistic science" to which he was so opposed ... he placed himself in the odd position of trying to refute mechanistic science from within its own paradigm, using its own methods ... Rhine had some very strange ideas about the nature of "religion." At times, it seems he considered the term to be belief in a nonphysical reality ... Likewise when he applied the term to belief in a G-d with certain attributes (such as omnipotence, omniscience, etc.) such a definition was not even representative of orthodox doctrine, much less of religious systems in general ..."¹⁵

However, scientists can only proceed on the strength of their own convictions, and Rhine was sure that the experimental data he had amassed and continued to obtain pointed clearly and

unequivocally towards a nonphysical side of man. His methods improved with each passing year. His statistics were vindicated and still people seemed to know that which they should not have known, do that which they should not have been able to do, given the shape of the physics of the time.

Some religionists agreed wholeheartedly with Rhine's conclusions. In Christian Horizons in an article published in 1943, the following appeared:

"...Conclusive evidence issuing from psychological laboratories at Duke, Harvard, and other seats of learning, has firmly established the religious beliefs of centuries that man has extra-sensory powers ... The value of such research to theology itself, as a substantiating element ... [is] .. of inestimable value ... if the efficacy of prayer could be substantiated scientifically... It is the conviction of a growing number of people that if the genuinely Christian people of the world could only comprehend the power of thought they could use it 'as a lever of life the world' ..."¹⁶

The author of a pamphlet prepared for St. Paul's Cathedral that surveyed psychical research agreed with the previous writer but then ended his piece with an interesting comment, that unwittingly perhaps, contradicted Rhine's personal motivations:

"... I do not for one moment suggest [the writer stated] that psychical research can prove the truth of religion, still less be a substitute for it. I say that I think it can help us, and that for Christians simply to ignore it is foolish and faint-hearted."¹⁷

When one reads Rhine's writing, however, it becomes painfully clear that he did intend to prove the truth of religion, that he did seek to replace religion with a scientifically-based belief in the nonphysical. He even went so far as to say:

"The aim of religion is to provide, through its doctrine answers to the most fundamental questions about the nature of man and what he can do to control his destiny ... If parapsychology finds answers to the question for which religious doctrines have been developed in the past, there is no reason why these should not replace the earlier conceptions in much the same way that chemistry has replaced alchemy and scientific medicine has taken the place of the practices of prescientific days."¹⁸

While some religionists applauded this point of view,

others felt somehow insulted by Rhine's approach. Rhine seemed to be bent on devaluing faith, inspiration, the centrality of revelation and mystical knowing.

Reframing the Question: The most powerful argument against the theory of nonphysicality is, of course, that science can not, and should not, attempt to answer ultimate questions. Ultimate questions are belief-related, value-infused and emotionally-derived. Any science that attempts to "prove" beliefs or seeks to support statements of faith is a pseudoscience. Orthodox science certainly sees things that way.

But a variety of lesser arguments, none the less damning, exists within the literature of parapsychology itself. As stated in 1962 by Thouless, these arguments express wonder how we can presume to know so much about the physical world that we can feel justified in calling some observed behavior or ability nonphysical. Specifically, Thouless wrote:

"... When physicists come to accept the facts of parapsychology, they will try to think of a physical explanation of them. It is extremely unlikely that a successful explanation will make them fit into the system of the present physical expectations ... but ... can we be sure that some ingenious young theoretical physicist will not think of an explanation further .. from accepted orthodoxy than the modifications ... made necessary by ... the quanta effects? But how much further would it have to be in order that it could be called a non-physical principle of explanation."¹⁹

To a certain degree Rhine anticipated this argument, and maintained throughout his career that the concept of nonphysicality was a transient one,²⁰ and that he could not be expected to anticipate the future of physics -- that "physics could take care of itself".²¹ However, his habit of calling parapsychology the "science of the nonphysical", of drawing wide-ranging inferences from the principle of nonphysicality to religious beliefs, moral order, world peace and the American political ideology completely obscured whatever tentativeness he may have meant.

Now, in 1984, the quantum mechanical theories of psi are gaining ground.²² Experimental data seem to point to the direct effect of consciousness on the physical world. Claiming that psychokinesis is proof of 'nonphysicality', of some 'spiritual' influence can now be seen to be premature at best, meaningless at worst. The physical world, at the quantum level at least, is not so well understood that physical boundaries have been clearly drawn. How then can we reasonably speculate on what might lie beyond those indefinite boundaries? Consequently I am afraid that we have been left back at square one.

The original impetus for the Rhines' studies -- the strength of their personal beliefs -- was obscured completely by a methodology that ignored the underlying experience of the ineffable. This is the failure that the Academy so keenly feels. Just as beleaguered humanists often wonder "where the people went" when faced with the obliquely experimental reports of today's psychology, many psychical researchers have wondered, when confronted with Rhinean parapsychology's attempt to illuminate religion through experimental reduction, where the human experience that gave rise to religion was lost.

Conclusion. The Rhinean approach has had its success. We are somewhat closer to defining the limits of human sensory ability, somewhat closer to understanding how psi occurs, somewhat closer to delineating experimental conditions necessary for a modest variety of replicability. We have made progress on nearly every experimental front, but we are not more able to talk about the meaning of the paranormal in daily life, in the religious context, in the laboratory itself, than we ever were.

We need to shake off our tendency to adopt the methodology of "hard" scientists when the questions to which we hope to speak are inherently human ones. We need to adopt a scholarly approach, a soft science approach. But we do not need to reinvent the wheel. The methodologies of the humanities and those of the softest of the social sciences already exist and are available to us. Let us take informed advantage of these.

Those of us who are interested in whether or not the "psi component" exists in the religions of the world, can identify core concepts in a more empirical way than the Rhine's did. The writing and oral teachings of religions, and the branches of theology and anthropology that study them can be searched for a visible consensus. Once found we can ask: Is the Idea of of a nonphysical reality central to many or all? Is a non-physical entity assumed? If so, what are its abilities? What experiences do religions point to as being "proofs" of the existence of such an entity. Are they current experiences, everyday experiences or historical myths and legends? Are they spontaneous or are they induced? Do experiences we would classify as "normal" figure heavily in these "proofs"? Do experiences that we would classify as "paranormal" figure heavily in these "proofs"? If a core religious experience is identified how does it relate to daily behavior, to the development and maintenance of moral systems, to practices surrounding life-changing and life-threatening events?

It is also possible to ask, as Patric Geisler has begun to do, whether psi functioning is found in more unusual religious environments, in shamanistic cults, for example. Geisler now actively addresses the question of the influence of shamanistic training procedures on experiences and abilities we would call paranormal.²³

Of immediate importance is a re-emphasis on field investigations along the careful and fruitful roads the near-death

investigators have recently been traveling, although without the trend towards metaphysical speculation.²⁴

A multivariate approach is necessary. Not only should we verify cases to as great an extent as is possible - and by verify I mean, not only to attempt to establish external collaboration but also to interview the experiencer carefully, in the best Stevensonian style. Also needed are personality indices, medical histories, clinical estimates of family interactions based on objective and systematic projective techniques, some information on the history of similar experiences occurring previously in the same families, and most importantly for the Academy, information on the religious beliefs of the experiencer, those of their families and any indicator of behavioral transformations caused by the experience.

Sociology has been developing a variety of case study methods, some of which proceed from evaluation research. There are methods that could be useful for us. Clinical psychology and psychiatry continue to develop objective and projective tests that can be extremely useful when used in a careful and conservative way. Also available are a variety of improved interviewing techniques. A survey of various literatures and methodologies could bring some extremely useful suggestions to us. Among that which might prove to be fertile ground are: the vast literature in psychology on the analysis of verbal reports, and on attribution theory; communication theory, particularly that which focuses on conversational analysis; and the methodologies developed to utilize oral history and personal documents for the purpose of more subjectively rich but empirically sound historical research.

In experimental parapsychology we are beginning to see something of this multivariate approach when we look at the "Participant Intake Programs" now in place at a few of the major experimental laboratories.²⁵ Extensive questionnaires are given to volunteers who take part in a variety of experiments over a relatively long period of time. Items in these questionnaires survey everything from demographics to religious beliefs, from personal habits such as frequency of dreaming and risk-taking behaviors to previous psi experiences. Eventually it may be possible to factor analyze the characteristics of both experiencers and experimental participants on a variety of personality variables, religious beliefs and practices, and values, as well as to pattern analyze for differences between those experiencers or experimental participants who provide good evidence for the paranormal and those who provide weak evidence. While any data so obtained would be incredibly complex, given the depth of computer data management systems now available to us they may not be hopelessly so.

Such work would proceed at a snail's pace, certainly. But when one imagines the writer's cramp Edmund Gurney of the SPR must have suffered during the verification of cases collected through the Census of Hallucinations; when one comes to grips with the magnitude of the life's work of Louisa Rhine, work

accomplished completely through correspondence and hand-tallies; when one surveys the equally enormous accomplishments of Stevenson; not to mention the new studies of Greyson and the like, ~~and~~ with the help of a friendly and industrious computer, such an enormous task seems at least doable.

And if someday the mechanistic variety of our experimental work succeeds in setting the permanent boundaries of the physical, so that some fearless soul in the distant future can reasonably theorize beyond them to the ultimate, the carefully preserved and analyzed testimony of human experience will not have been lost. The subjective details will be waiting to flesh out individual data points, to cast new light on long columns of statistical comparisons, and at last to provide meaningful commentary on the nature of man.

1. Mario Bunge (1982). Demarcating science from pseudo-science. Fundamenta Scientiae, 3, (3/4), 369-388. p. 373.
2. Ibid. p. 374.
3. Laurie Huff (1981). J.B. Rhine and Parapsychology: A Human Quest. Unpublished manuscript. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago.
4. Louisa E. Rhine (1983). Something Hidden. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company, Inc., Publishers. pp. 6-14.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. J.B. Rhine and Louisa E. Rhine (1978). A search for the nature of the mind. In T.S. Krawiec (ed.), The Psychologists, Volume 3, Brandon, Vermont: Clinical Psychology Publishing Company. (181-205) pp. 184, 196.
8. "...the experimental results of these psi studies present phenomena from human life that require the rejection of the conception of man as a wholly physical system. This is simply to say that the acceptance of the occurrence of nonphysical finding of parapsychology today is necessarily to abandon any view of human nature dependent wholly upon physical principles." J.B. Rhine (1960). On Parapsychology and the Nature of Man. In Sidney Hook (ed.), Dimensions of Mind: A Symposium. New York: New York University Press. (71-77) p. 75.
9. Something Hidden. p. 18.
10. J.B. Rhine (1945). Parapsychology and religion (Editorial). Journal of Parapsychology, 9, 1-6.
11. J.B. Rhine (1947). The Reach fo the Mind. New York: William Sloane and Associates. p. 206.
12. J.B. Rhine and Parapsychology: A Human Quest. p. 7.
13. John Beloff (1974). Synopsis of "ESP and Altered States of Consciousness" by Charles Honorton. In J. Beloff (ed.), New Directions in Parapsychology. Metuchen, New Jersey: Scarecrow Press. p. 34.
14. Ibid. p. 185.
15. J.B. Rhine and Parapsychology. p. 15.
16. B. Roy Brown (1943). The new place of psychology in religion. Christian Horizons 5, 5-10. p. 5.
17. W.R. Matthews (19?) The Churches and Psychical Research. (Pamphlet. St. Paul's Cathedral). p. 8.
18. Journal of Parapsychology. p. 1.

20. "...Within the more fundamental confines of science itself the two aspects of reality [physical and nonphysical] now distinguished appear for the present at least to constitute areas whose interrelations themselves present new territory for the long future to explore ... This longer view brings us, even in parapsychology, to a novel emphasis -- in appearance almost a reversal -- an emphasis ... on the integration of psi with the physical order of the universe." J.B. Rhine and J.G. Pratt (1957). Parapsychology: Frontier Science of the Mind. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. p. 73.
21. "The person who most often expresses reluctance to agree to the specified boundary line between parapsychology and physics is the speculative enthusiast who is already looking ahead to the physics of tomorrow...he will argue against calling anything nonphysical until the whole domain of physics has been mapped ... One cannot wait, of course, for further advances in physics or in parapsychology or any other branch of inquiry. It is necessary to take present knowledge, put it together as best one can, use the best working concepts available, and settle for whatever hypothesis can most soundly and simply explain the phenomena. The present conclusion, then, is that there is something in the psi-test results that calls for a type or order of reality beyond that which is physical -- an extraphysical one [author's emphasis]. Let the future of physics, like the future of parapsychology, take care of itself." New World of the Mind. pp. 121-132.
22. Evan Harris Walker (1975). Foundations of parophysical and parapsychological phenomena. In L. Oteri (ed.) Quantum Physics and Parapsychology, New York: Parapsychology Foundation. Pages 1-44.
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ACCELERATED CEREBRATION: AN INTEGRATED VIEW
OF MYSTICISM, CREATIVITY, AND PSI

F. Gordon Greene

Abstract: Drawing upon data of NDE research, the author argues that some mystical experiences may consist of vast collections of spatio-temporally extended sensory experiences, transfigured into higher dimensional, simultaneously perceived wholes. Within this proposed context the author examines the panoramic vision of life, creativity, and ESP.

The mystical experience has been defined as a state of understanding categorically distinct from and transcendent over the states of consciousness (SCs) grounded inside space and time. Mystical experience according to this interpretation is a form of knowing that lies entirely beyond spatiotemporal distinctions and is by its essential nature totally incomprehensible to waking level egoic consciousness.

This view, has been forcefully and eloquently espoused by W.T. Stace in The Teaching of The Mystics (1960) and Mysticism and Philosophy (1960). For Stace fully developed mystical experiences involve "...the apprehension of an ultimate nonsensuous unity in all things, a oneness or One to which neither the senses or the reason can penetrate" (p. 14).

While I do not dismiss the possibility that this understanding of mystical experience may be ultimately valid, many of its assumptions and connotations are challenged in this presentation. What is loosely termed a "consciousness modification formula" is introduced in order to demonstrate a cognitive relationship between the waking level ego and certain levels of awareness that are often judged to be mystical.

This formula is based primarily upon an analysis of instances of accelerated mental activity or cerebration frequently reported to accompany near-death experiences (NDEs). Allusions to accelerated cerebration found in the literature of mysticism are also examined. The concept of expanded time windows is proposed as the most suitable construct inside of which theoretically to structure this consciousness modification formula. Discussion is also directed to the phenomena of extrasensory perception (ESP) and creativity. ESP and creativity are seen to result from interactions between the waking ego and more expansive levels of potential consciousness whose sensory/perceptual systems encompass more expansive tracks of space/time.

A Depth Construct Model for NDEs: To appreciate the rationale behind this consciousness modification formula it must be assumed, at least for the sake of argument, that the NDE unfolds progressively inside one broad but generally consistent and causally connected pattern. Assuming the progressive development of NDEs through a fairly well structured cluster of experiential events suggests in turn, the value of thinking in terms of an NDE depth construct.

A number of researchers have proposed sequentially ordered NDE depth constructs, among them Robert Crookall (1965), Russell Noyes, Jr. (1972), Raymond Moody (1975) and Kenneth Ring (1980). For the requirements of this presentation attention is focussed upon four general facets of NDE phenomenology that are more often than not, experienced successively to one another in a particular order. These facets are 1) resistance; 2) out-of-body experience (OBE); 3) panoramic memory or the life review and 4) mystical experience or at least the fringes of mystical experience.

Let us now examine these proposed stages in more depth.

Resistance: In one of his earlier papers on NDEs Noyes (1972) studied the psychophysical reactions of individuals faced with either real or assumed accidental threats to life. He observed that an enormous upsurge in physical and mental energy often accompanied these perceived threats. Noyes remarked that "many persons felt... that they performed feats, both mental and physical, of which they would ordinarily have been incapable" (p. 24).

Eighty years prior to Noyes' research similar conclusions were reached in what is probably the first systematic scientifically oriented near-death study. In his 1893 report "Remarks on Fatal Falls" the Swiss Geologist and mountain climber Albert Heim observed that many life threatened individuals "acted with lightning quickness in accord with accurate judgments of their situation" (p. 47).

The Out-of-Body Experience and Accelerated Cerebration:

If the threat of bodily demise is not eclipsed by the emergence of these enormous psychophysical reserves, life threatened individuals sometimes seem to transcend or go beyond this crisis passing into the OBE. If the speculations advanced in this presentation are credible, it would be expected that OBE subjects would report experiencing heightened and expanded sensory/perceptual abilities. This is actually frequently reported to be the case.

Whether or not it is proper to speak of OBE and NDE visions as if they were derived from "sensory/perceptual" mechanisms, is an extremely complex issue that cannot be properly assayed in this paper. For the sake of this presentation it is assumed that sensory/perceptual apparatus of some sort are operational during the OBE, NDE and other related fringe mystical experiences to be analyzed.

Returning more specifically to the question of accelerated mental activity during NDEs, it is noted that Moody (1975) remarked "over and over, I have been told that once they become accustomed to their new situation, people undergoing this experience began to think more lucidly and rapidly than in physical existence" (p. 50).

An increased speed and vividness in thought, a sharpening of vision and hearing and a feeling of having attained a great understanding about themselves and the universe were common impressions reported by the near-death subjects of Noyes and his colleague, Roy Kletti (1976).

Ring (1980) commenting upon perceptual processes as apparently experienced by his NDE subjects remarked that "the common theme running through these accounts is one of heightened sensory awareness and mental clarity. When present, the senses are sharper; when absent, it is the mind itself that remains sharp. Sensory and thinking processes seem to work together to make the near-death experience vivid, distinct and subjectively real" (p. 94).

Similar findings on the heightening and acceleration of mental activity during NDEs have been reported in the near-death studies of Johann Christoph Hampe (1979), Karlis Osis and Erlunder Haraldsson (1977), and George Gallup (1982).

Panoramic Memory and Accelerated Cerebration: As the NDE progresses from the initial OBE period into deeper stages, sometimes subjects report experiencing fleeting or even simultaneous panoramic life reviews. The review may include every single instant in the subject's life or only the more memorable moments of that life.

As reported by Ring (1981) in his study "Precognitive and Prophetic Visions in Near-Death Experiences," in a small number of cases subjects believe that they view not only their past but what would be their "future," were they to decide to return to physical world existence.

On the heightening of thought processes and panoramic memory one NDE subject remarked "My thoughts sped up; time slowed down; and my attention was redirected toward survival and deeply embedded memories" (Noyes and Kletti, p. 55, 1982). Describing similar feelings another NDE subject observed

that "My thoughts were speeded up and time seemed stretched out" (Noyes and Kletti, p. 56, 1982).

In a classic NDE account too long to quote in this presentation, the 18th century Admiral Francis Beaufort recounts his experience of almost drowning as a child. This account has been quoted repeatedly and may be found in books by Moody (1977) and Craig Lundahl (1982) and in a 1980 issue of the newsletter Anabiosis.

Beaufort's account clearly describes an acceleration of thinking that seemed to be correlated with an expansion of the time sense. The experience culminated in a simultaneous panoramic life review followed by a deceleration in thinking and what seemed to be an accompanying contraction of the time sense until the waking level ego reemerged.

In one of the most insightful summaries of the modifications in consciousness characteristic of NDEs I have yet to read, Noyes and Kletti (1982) observe that:

The most frequently reported subjective phenomenon experienced during extreme danger was an apparent slowing down of time..this was outer or environmental time, as opposed to inner time, which was perceived as being correspondingly increased in speed. Not only did elapsed time seem drawn out, but events seemed to happen in slow motion. Yet in contrast to the outward slowing, individuals described their thoughts as speeded up...and expressed amazement at the number of thoughts or mental images that passed through their minds in a matter of seconds. These two aspects of the experience of time were generally described together and were clearly related to one another (p. 57).

Further on in their summary they note that "Mystical Consciousness...appeared to be an extension or further elaboration of the deviation in consciousness thus far described" (p. 60).

Mysticism and Accelerated Cerebration: The accounts analyzed up to this point in the paper have dealt with NDEs. However, phenomenologically similar reports of alterations in awareness are sometimes found in the literature of mysticism. Some mystics seem to have discovered the potential benefits in consciousness modification that are sometimes initiated by life threatening circumstances.

The early 20th century mystic G.I. Gurdjieff reportedly drove cars so recklessly and at such high speeds that not one among his followers would accompany him on his car riding excursions (Bennett, 1974). The contemporary mystic Werner Erhard has taken up race car driving. His stated purpose is

to perform "experiments" of some sort. The accounts I have read do not clearly state what these experiments are. Viewed within the context of this presentation, it seems probable that Erhard is conducting experiments in consciousness modification brought about by the high speeds and potentially dangerous situations resulting therefrom.

Fortunately the literature of mysticism contains more than just circumstantial evidence or vague descriptions of the kind of altered states analyzed in this paper. J.M. Cohen and J.F. Pipp's book The Common Experience (1979), describes a mystical alteration in consciousness. The experience occurred during the WWII North African battle of El Alamein, but during a lull in the fighting. Arising from a ~~conscious~~ condition, it cannot be directly causally linked with NDE related modifications in awareness.

The subject remembers that:

For the first time since before the battle I was lying on the ground rather than in slit trench or inside a tank or armoured car. The dust of battle which had obscured the sky had quite gone, and the stars were enormous and magnificent.

Suddenly my train of thought accelerated and vastly improved in quality, new and convincing ideas came into my head in a steady torrent... There was no specific 'religious' aspect in the pattern of ideas...It had to do with man's (my) position in the universe; with eternity, which became readily understandable; with infinity...and so on until, as suddenly as it had started, the train of thought passed... (p. 22).

The 18th century Swedish scientist mystic and religious writer Emmanuel Swedenborg (1976) commented upon heightened and accelerated mental faculties in his spiritual classic Heaven and Hell. He claimed to speak from personal experience and asserted that for the last 27 years of his life he was able to glimpse into and actually enter spiritual realms beyond our earthly space and time. Swedenborg offered numerous detailed descriptions of the intellectual faculties he claimed were possessed by the inhabitants of these higher worlds. Some of these inhabitants he referred to as angels. Swedenborg stated that "angels have all the senses man has, and in fact far more sensitive ones, for the light in which they see is far clearer than the light in which man sees" (p. 116). Swedenborg continues noting that angels see things "with far more clarity, crispness, and vividness" (p. 117).

Referring more specifically to the power of accelerated thought, Swedenborg asserts that "angels can say more in a minute than man can say in half an hour. They can also set down in a few words the contents of many written pages" (p. 150). In referring to the powers of insight possessed by angels Swedenborg remarks that "The ratio between their wisdom and human wisdom is on the order of ten thousand to one" (p. 168). To account for the transcendental intellectual faculties he attributed to angels Swedenborg states that 'angels' thoughts are not limited and constrained by ideas derived from space and time the way human thoughts are" (p. 166). He then says that "Angels' thoughts are not drawn into earthly or material matters nor interrupted by anxieties over the necessities of life" (p. 166).

Expanded Time Windows: I am aware of one theory that clearly and comprehensively accommodates the diverse number of NDE and mystical sensation phenomenological effects considered in this presentation. This theory is advanced by the consciousness researcher Samuel McLaughlin in his book Feeling Good (1978) and in his paper "The Relation Between Physical Dimensions and Higher Consciousness" (1978-80).

In these writings McLaughlin outlines a challenging theory of human consciousness. A key element in this theory is the concept of expanding time windows. McLaughlin notes that:

Our usual assumption is that the world as shown to us by our senses is three-dimensional, but this assumption is inaccurate. Pure three-dimensional forms, having no element of time or no fourth dimension, would have no duration, and so could not enter our experience. Four-dimensional sensory observation is equally outside the range of human experience, for it implies sensory awareness of the eternal sequences of events as a unit. Clearly, we ordinarily perceive the world neither in its three-dimensional aspect nor in its four-dimensional aspect. Rather human sense-impressions lie somewhere between these two extremes (p. 67).

For the purposes of this presentation it is assumed that the world perceived by the physical senses is far closer to the third dimension than to the fourth. It is assumed to be close enough in fact to allow us to conceive of it as approximately three dimensional.

McLaughlin goes on to review the findings of classic psychological studies that determined the time element human subjects perceive to be simultaneous. This instant

was measured by diminishing the interval between two flashing lights until no time element was registered between the flashes. This instant turned out to be approximately one tenth of a second. McLaughlin terms this instant the sensory/material time window.

McLaughlin then speculates about the existence of expanded time windows, whose reference points for moments of immediacy extend up through seconds, minutes, hours and so on. He speculates that this expanded time window continuum continues up to eternity, which he equates with the complete spatialization of "time" into a fourth-dimension. It is his belief that all the altered states of consciousness experienced by human beings lie somewhere between three and four dimensions.

In the following discussion the expanding time window concept will be utilized to account for the following NDE phenomenological effects and related mystical sensations: 1) The sensation of accelerated cerebration; 2) the sensation of time slowing down; 3) the sensation of time expanding; 4) the sensation of the life review as fleeting; 5) the sensation of the life review as simultaneous; and 6) the sensation of receiving precognitive perceptions during the life review.

First however a few additional premises must be added to the time window concept. The initial premise is that our sensory/material time window is embedded in a space of approximately three dimensions. For simplicity's sake we will hereafter refer to this space as three-dimensional. The second is that three-dimensional space and the sensory/material time window along with it, trace through a four-dimensional space. This is in much the same way as a line or one dimensional space may be thought to trace through a plane or two dimensional space. Finally it must be accepted that the center of the proposed time window expansion is always fixed upon the moving three-dimensional space. It always expands equally into the past and future of the moving three dimensional space. Relative to the time window expansion, three dimensional space, in one sense, may be considered stationary.

The acceptance of one additional premise, a premise not directly linked to those above, is necessary to continue the discussion. It must be agreed that some aspect of the waking ego remains as an observer throughout these mystical and other NDE related alterations in consciousness. This seems necessary to assume in order that any "memory" what-so-ever of mystical sensations and other facets of NDEs return with experiencers to waking level egoic consciousness. Some aspect or parameter of the waking ego that is capable of differentiating between and contrasting the properties of these mystical and other NDE related altered states with the ego perceived properties of the physical world must be present. If it were not, how could NDE experiencers and mystical experience

chroniclers report, as they often do, the vast range of modifications in consciousness appraised in this paper? Perhaps in the higher reaches of mystical experience this aspect of the ego becomes totally dissolved in a cosmic consciousness. We are considering fringe mystical experiences in this presentation and need not consider what may or may not take place in levels of consciousness beyond this paper's focus.

Having clarified these points, our time-window exposition may now begin.

The first effect to be covered is the sensation of accelerated cerebration. It is speculated that this effect is created by a combination of two distinct space/time motions. One is the time window expansion. The other is the passage of three dimensional space, along with the expanding time window centered fixed upon it, through the fourth dimension. These two motions assure both a fluid or temporally sequenced interchange in the content of the experiencers' consciousness and a constant increase in the amount of spatio-temporal data present in that consciousness. The combined effect, according to this theory, produces the sensation of accelerated cerebration.

The next effect is the sensation of time slowing down. As noted the present moment to the waking level ego is about one tenth of a second. If we assume that something of this mental level participates in the expansion, it becomes fairly obvious why subjects might report a slowing down of time. During the process of time window expansion the present moment takes up increasingly more time relative to the sensory/material time window. Time is passing by more slowly relative to what experiencers are accustomed to experiencing as time's passage in waking level ego states.

The sensation of time expanding is now considered. For the waking level ego time's passage seems to occur in a linear sequence as events come from the future, are experienced, and trail off into the past. It is this process of temporal exchange that is identified by the waking ego as the time sense. During time window expansions something of this same time sense carries on. This is because the expanding time window remains center fixed upon three dimensional space. Experiencers in the midst of this expansive process still sense the passage of time, as the expanding time window moves along with three-dimensional space through the fourth dimension. The passage just becomes progressively protracted or, as the experiencers themselves, have stated expansive. In other words the sense of time seems to expand because the present moment, identified as the process of time passing by, grows in duration.

The next effect is the sensation of the life review as a fleeting vision. This effect is thought to be reported by near-death experiencers who remember either the expanding or contracting phases of the time-window life review vision. Subjects who report simultaneous life reviews are considered to have experienced the culminating stage of time window expansion. In these instances a fully four dimensional panorama of life may be displayed.

Finally the sensation of acquiring precognitive information during life reviews is considered. This effect becomes intelligible when we reconsider once again the premise of the time window expanding equally into the past and future from its position on the moving three dimensional space. The expansion dialates evenly into past and future. Precognitive visions result from the experient's awareness of the future directed time dialation.

A Cognitive Formula For Fringe Mystical Experience:

The human mind's capacity to accelerate far beyond waking level egoic powers of cerebration cannot be denied. More than ample experimental evidence from a whole field of psychology demonstrates this. Throughout much of the twentieth century psychologists have successfully altered the time sense in hypnotic subjects. Some of these alterations in the time sense are amenable to objective measurement. For example, one hypnotic subject with talents as a song writer was placed in deep trance and told to visit an imaginary town where she would find a coffee house. In this coffee house she was instructed to see a singing guitar player. She was told to listen to a half hour long set of music and do so in five minutes of objective time. In five minutes the subject arose from trance and was able to immediately write down the songs she had heard. They were completely new tunes and of a quality comparable to the scores she customarily produced in ordinary ego states. The only difference was that ordinarily several hours or even more time might be required for her to accomplish this task instead of the five minutes it took her while in trance (Masters and Houston, 1972). This example demonstrates not only the human mind's extraordinary capacity to experience time distortion. It also illustrates something of the relationship between time distortion and creativity.

The more profound instances of accelerated cerebration reported among NDE subjects and mystical sensation experiencers cannot now and may never be objectively measured. These altered states of consciousness (ASCs) may, however, be looked upon as continuations of the human capacity to experience time distortion that manifests during hypnotic trance or delusions.

In this regard, it is important that we not forget the initial resistance stage of the NDE in which radical accelerations in thinking sometimes manifest. These entry way

cerebrations into the NDE are potentially amenable to objective measurement. They strongly suggest that the even more profound accelerations in thinking that seem to accompany the deeper stages of NDEs cannot automatically be dismissed as insubstantial hallucinations.

If it is accepted for the sake of argument that these reports of accelerated cerebration in the deeper stages of NDEs are in some transcendental sense veridical, the following consciousness modification formula suggests itself.

This speculation is closely related to Ring's observation quoted earlier that "sensory and thinking processes seem to work together during NDEs." If sharper and expanded sensory/perceptual faculties and accelerated thinking abilities do become progressively more profound throughout the deepening of NDEs, it may be that similarly expanded powers of insight and concept formation might also be activated. Perhaps the number of veridical connections one might be able to make about the relationship between that particular life moment, one's whole life and the entire universe would also increase during this heightening and acceleration of the mind's sensory/perceptual and thinking powers.

If so, the interpretations by NDE subjects of the life threatening situations they are experiencing might become progressively more insightful and possess accumulatively more truth value conjunctively with the continued elevation of these mental faculties.

This being the case, we would expect to see emerge certain structures in the mind resulting from this elevation that would correspond with waking level ego oriented insights and related belief structures. This follows from the observation that our insights and beliefs in waking level ego states are formed at least partially out of the successive sensory/perceptual impressions we receive.

Higher level thought structures that seem to share this same relationship to the elevated mental faculties under discussion are found in the testimonies of some NDE subjects and mystical sensation experiencers. One NDE survivor commenting upon the heightened powers of insight opened up during her brush with death remembered that her cerebral activity was "kind of like a whole section of thought put in the perspective of an understanding" (Green and Friedman, p. 83, 1983).

Another subject remembered of his OBE that "Thoughts came to ... me in a flash" (Green, p. 86, 1967). The 19th century English writer Thomas De Quincy (1785 - 1859) recollects the panoramic memory experience of a woman he knew who almost drowned as a child. She experienced a vivid, all encompassing simultaneous life review. Commenting upon this De Quincy noted that "she had a faculty developed as suddenly for comprehending the whole and every part of her

life" (Moody, p. 74, 1977).

The 16th century Christian mystic St. Teresa of Avila seems to refer to this same faculty of expansive understanding when she recounts something of her ecstatic voyages into mystical realms of consciousness. She remarks that "In a single instant [the soul] is taught so many things all at once that if it were to labour for years on end in trying to fit them into its imagination and thought, it could not succeed with a thousandth part of them. (p. 160, 1961).

In numerous passages from Heaven and Hell Swedenborg seems to discuss this faculty of expansive understanding. In an exemplary passage he remarks that:

...the wisdom of angels of the inmost heaven consists primarily of seeing Divine and heavenly matters in individual objects, and marvels in a sequence of several. For everything visible to their eyes has a correspondence; so that when they see a palace and gardens, their focus does not become fixed on the kind of thing that lies before their eyes. Instead, they see the inner realities from which these things stem, to which they therefore correspond. This occurs with constant variation, depending on the appearance of the objects, so that they see countless elements in sequence, connected, which so delights their minds that they seem to be taken out of themselves (p. 171).

If this hypothetical process of sensory/perceptual acceleration and expansive understanding is continued on up to the level of the fourth dimension and eternity, the beginnings or fringes of mystical experience will have been attained. This at least is the assumption one would follow based upon McLaughlin's time window concept adapted for the purposes of this presentation.

Within the context of this cognitive formula, fringe mystical experience is not based upon transcendental mental processes which, if we were to accept the words of W.T. Stace, "neither the senses nor the reason can penetrate." However true Stace's categorization may be for the deeper levels of mystical experience, we need not invoke it to conceptualize the material appraised in this presentation.

The extraordinary spiritual insights and truths many NDE subjects and mystical sensation experiencers believe they have gleaned during the deepest stages of their ecstatic spiritual world voyages, do not derive from incomprehensible visionary processes. They are rather, causally related to higher level cognitive processes sharing something in common with the sensory perceptual and conceptual powers

of the waking level ego mind. These higher cognitive processes may be conceived of as dependent extensions to the apparatus the ego mind uses to comprehend the external world.

Lying as they do beyond the domain of the physical senses, the functioning of these higher level faculties cannot be clearly grasped by the waking level ego. Many higher level insights and truths which are thought to constitute spiritual wisdom and seem vague and amorphous when considered in the light of the physical world, do not lack internal substance. It is the dullness of the ego mind that keeps us from appreciating the fullness of these higher truths.

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BUILDING TOMORROW ON THE TRUE MYSTICAL EVENT

By George W. Fisk

Abstract: After postulating that all civilizations, religions, science, and culture have had roots in significant mystical events, the author examines the possibility that we may today become open channels for the creation of new worlds of thought. He concludes with speculation on possible first steps toward this achievement.

Part 1. Mechanistic views of the universe deny the existence of a mystical event. They would claim that parapsychology is a pseudo-science. Any person with scientific integrity must stay out of fields which have often been shown to be filled with frauds and charlatans. While not denying that malicious hucksters have hoodwinked the innocent we cannot therefore put a fence around the entire field of the broad areas we describe as metaphysical-parapsychological and simply deny that there is anything there. It is the thesis of this paper that the shining castle of hopes and dreams which will be the dynamic of the world to come is centered in a mystical event. We shall seek to first establish the fact that the creative energy for civilizations of the past came from events which need parapsychology for complete interpretation. Then we shall attempt to describe the nature of these events. Finally we shall attempt to outline the nature of tomorrow's science which will not deny, but rather embrace the parapsychological in guiding us to the best possible world to come.

It is easy to name four great religious cultures which had their beginnings in a mystical event. Let us look at Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Gotama Buddha born to wealth, raised in luxury, as a young adult began to see the hardships of the majority of people and therefore became an ascetic. Later he became a prophet following a mystical event. One night waiting in contemplation under a pipalos tree he enjoyed an extraordinary experience. "Presently into Gotama's heart shone a light not of this world, and joy and gladness and the consciousness of freedom. He thought with amazing clearness, his perceptions were acute. His powers of decision, reflection, reasoning became luminous. A new unity of heart and mind lifted him, as upon the crest of waves from an eternal sea, toward the harbor of a shining eternity."¹ From this event springs an entire new wave of religion and culture. Buddhism spreads forth over India, China, Japan, southeast Asia with a wide variety of styles as it blends with other cultures. It would be hard to prove that this religion and the culture that comes from it would ever have existed without the original mystical event.

More briefly, in similar fashion we find Moses tending sheep in the wilderness hearing the voice of God speak from a

burning bush telling him to return to Egypt to bring his people the Israelites back to their Promised Land. Could Judaism have existed through the centuries without this and similar mystical events? Saul the zealous Pharisee is journeying to Damascus on his way to murder more Christians when the apparition of Jesus appears to him. Because of this experience from "the other world" Saul is turned 180 degrees to become the greatest missionary of his day and the author of a large portion of the Christian Bible. Would Christianity have come into being without this and other mystical events of its history? In the desert wilderness near Mecca a man named Mohammed sees a dazzling presence and hears a voice calling, "O Mohammed, thou art the Prophet of God, and I am Gabriel."² From this event another major religion and culture are born.

Not one of these major civilizations was born through a number of leaders sitting down and making rational plans for what might be a better way of life. All of these four as well as a great many other similar cultures were born out of events which had major parapsychological overtones. An other-worldly force, directive, or mind energizes chosen persons into roles of powerful leadership.

For those whose orientation is not in the direction of religion it is almost as easy to come up with lists of philosophers, scientists, statesmen, inventors, and creators in many fields who credit their key inspiration to a moment which can only be explained in parapsychological terminology. Certain persons having addressed a particular problem, and having filled their minds with all pertinent data, still have no solution. Then the answer comes in a dream, or some kind of odd insight. It can be James Watt dreamily looking at steam coming from a tea kettle and visioning the mighty power which would later drive giant locomotives pulling huge trains. (Of Michael Faraday the great physicist, John Tyndall wrote, "We have in him flashes of wondrous insight and utterances which seem less the product of reasoning than revelation."³

"Since the beginning of time our ancestors have grown in knowledge and insight through illuminative inner experiences. All scientific findings and creative inventions start with a clear inner vision of what could be. Once these visions resonate strongly enough within us, we find the means with which to give birth to them in everyday life."⁴

In summation, we can conclude that vast advances of civilization have come about by what can only be described as a mystical event. We do not deny much hard work on simple levels to prepare for the event, and much to be done afterwards to carry out its implications. But the key moment eludes facile description. Often it suggests though or energy we can only describe as coming from "beyond".

Part 2. What is the nature of the mystical event? To those who have sought to wrestle with this question, who have

read widely, and talked with those who claim to have experienced it, it soon becomes obvious that there is great difficulty in attaining agreement as to what constitutes a mystical event. To sharpen our question I propose that we talk about what I am calling the "true" mystical event. While studying in a large mental hospital I found it a quite common experience to have patients believe they were having revelations from God, angels, or saints. I suppose we can conclude that at least some of these persons were being unfairly confined...that is, they were having "true" mystical experiences. Seeing the miserable condition of most of these people it would be impossible for me to conclude that all or even the majority of them were engaged in a great mystical event. Furthermore, I have conducted brain wave EEG studies on a number of persons claiming unusual psychic abilities. Some of these persons have demonstrated enormous amounts of thought flow which purports to come from "higher planes". It would seem plausible to me that if this is true we should be seeing some abnormalities in brain wave patterns during the experience. In fact during such tests it is common to detect unusual wave patterns. However, what is disturbing is to watch the psychics' wave pattern leave the abnormal...go into perfectly common beta...but the narration from "higher planes" never stops. The psychics whom I studied were not able to later tell me when they had returned to normal consciousness. I do not doubt the occassional remarkable flashes of information from psychics, nevertheless again and again we witness the failure of scores of psychics to reveal evidential clues to solve murders. Knowing this, how are we to judge the truth of material revealed from "higher planes".

Perhaps we do well to agree with Ken Wilber's comment that going from our normal beta consciousness into the wider and stronger bands of alpha and theta may have no relevance whatever to godliness or morality. It would probably not be difficult to find evil charismatic leaders, a Jim Jones or an Adolph Hitler, who displayed unusual brain wave patterns. It may be that historical evaluation over the centuries is our best determinant of the "true" mystical experience. Has it truly been helpful and uplifting? One simple interpretation of the true mystical experience could be at the level of a person studying a jig-saw puzzle. He may look for a long time, then he sees the right piece, tries it and it fits. In everyday life we bring together the knowledge we have acquired and attempt to deal with the problem of the moment. When our right insight fits the situation we have the "aha" experience. That piece which fits the problem together can be described as our mandala as Jose Arguelles describes in his book by the same name. To Westerners, the popular reintroduction of the Mandala concept can be specifically traced to the work of Carl G. Jung, who rediscovered the Mandala as a basic structural device in the alchemical tradition of the West, and as a therapeutic, integrative art form created by patients in their own search for individuation. But "insight", "intuitive mandala", etc. imply a "something" beyond mere rational thought.

The prologue of the Gospel of John suggests the Greek Platonic concept of a perfect form in heaven for everything on earth. This would imply that mystical events are simply the manifesting forth of something already existing in perfect form on another plane of existence. Christ who is co-eternal with God is the perfect concept of what our human lives can be. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him..."⁵ The practical effect upon believers is stated in the 14th chapter of John. "...who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do..."⁶

With regard to Plato's design Rupert Sheldrake in his A NEW SCIENCE OF LIFE wisely comments, "Plato considered that the forms in the world of sense-experience were like the imperfect reflections of transcendent archetypal Forms or Ideas. But this doctrine...failed to explain how the eternal Forms were related to the changing world of phenomena."⁷ In answering Sheldrake's criticism of Plato we do well to consider Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's concept of "radial energy" as a basic "within" to all matter which somehow continually strives to higher consciousness. It is this "radial energy" which has raised life on planet earth from mineral to vegetable to animal to man. This same energy now goes on to build a something higher than the material world which he describes as the Noosphere.

This leads us to consider the group mind as the source of the "true" mystical experience. Is there a vast mental pool of collective subconscious thought in which we may all participate while dreaming or in theta state? This would go a long way toward explaining simultaneous discoveries by individuals who have no known means of communication. There seems to be a mental resonance occurring between various individuals anywhere on the planet who in deep meditative state are working on similar problems. Sheldrakes' studies show that when rats are trained to do some specific new procedures, then all other rats, anywhere on the face of the earth, take less time to learn the same procedure. If rats can participate in such a mental pool surely human beings can do so to an even greater degree.

Teilhard refuses to accept the entropy theory of the universe...that what we are witnessing is the gradual dying of fires of a once great explosion. Rather he sees a drive on planet earth to ever higher consciousness. This seems to come from a spiritual source overshadowing all that is. Call it from higher planes if you wish. Include the spirits of the deceased in this pool of energy. Be open to the possibility of extra-terrestrial beings. Include the energies of those yet unborn as affecting the present. Accepting the probability as Sheldrake suggests that the forming energy which creates what we are is not electrical, chemical, or bio-chemical we find ourselves out on a long limb from a mechanistic view of the universe with little we can touch or prove. All we can do is look at the results

about us and try to surmize what was the creative source. As parapsychologists on one thing we agree. A mechanistic, "this-worldly" universe, moving through time simply by accident utterly fails to reasonably explain all that we see about us.

Part 3. Now we shall try to outline the nature of tomorrow's science, a science which can only fulfill its total role by embracing the parapsychological as a part of all that is. Indeed it is only in the parapsychological area that we have hope of dealing with the generative powers that lead us into ever new forms of life. In the study of altered states of consciousness we have a coming together of science and religion with a vigor perhaps never before seen. The EEG students want to get Zen Buddhists on their monitors to see what's going on. However we have a real problem on basic approach. Hard science as we have know it insists that experiments should be repeatable. Only so can we be sure of the accuracy of the description of the phenomenon. On the other hand we have the ephemeral nature of much of the psychic studies. Over the long years of study with Dr. Rhine's experiments in ESP the most conclusive factor was the gradual decline of ESP gifts over lengthy trials. While I don't doubt the truth of this gradual loss of the ESP faculty under repeated experiments, I would like to proclaim as forcefully as I can that the "true" mystical event must be grounded in the reality of everyday human experience.

We are talking about searching for a "new science" involving mysticism, creativity and PSI...in one major respect we should credit an old observation. The great mystics and saints of times past have all been persons who combined an experience of the "Other", with practical improvement of the quality of life in the here and now. Whether this be a St. Francis of Assisi or Mother Teresa these are people who have a great concern and love for common people which manifests itself in practical forms. Or to put it another way...the great saints and mystics have not so given themselves to prayer in isolation that they have excluded themselves from practical influence on human need. So in looking for our new science let us not become so concerned with studying the paranormal event that we lose sight of worthwhile impact on humanity. Jesus' Great Commandment was to "love God with heart, soul, mind, and strength, and one's neighbor as oneself". In my seeking to define the "true" mystical event this is my yardstick. Has it shown helpful effects upon the many problems and needs of the human race? I previously mentioned the many individuals in mental hospitals who claim to hear God, Jesus, the saints, or extra-terrestrials speaking to them. It may be that God is giving them some kind of blessing as individuals, but in general I feel we are right in asking for some kind of evidence in the world about us to see that they are productive. "By their fruit ye shall know them". At the same time, I recognize a problem here. I deplore the research funded by industry which always insists upon some immediate improvement of their product. Don't waste our time in research unless you can make a better bar of soap or a tougher and cheaper tin can. This can tie the hands of researchers. Our scientists need to be free to look

for knowledge simply for its own sake. Undesignated basic research should be a major priority for every nation. I honor the fact that the research being conducted in our Academy has little hope of either monetary gain, or short-term insignificant goals for humanity. Our shining castle of hopes and dreams for the future is built upon study and outlining of the factors mystical and parapsychological which have created our civilizations. Working under the guideline of insisting upon some long-term benefits for humanity what is the "newness" of our parapsychological science?

In contrast to modern science which has sought to solve the riddles of the universe by identifying ever smaller and smaller units of matter we seek to do the reverse. We insist upon attempting to deal with the totality of experience especially when it seems to deny our accepted "laws". We dare to try to relate the enormously broad fields of science, religion, and philosophy. Whether our studies be meditative practices, the place of memory in brain or a non-physical "mind", we dare to overlap broad fields of knowledge and ask daring questions. Those who live cozily within limited areas of study will resent our intrusions claiming we have not mastered their subject. Nevertheless nothing less than a total holistic approach to humanity and the universe is our area of study. Our manner of approach can be both a better and deeper understanding of our "within" and the outer world about us. We have access to more science and tools of communication than any previous generation. Perhaps after we have done our best with books and computers, with telescopes and microscopes, we too will be lifted along in our journey of the mind by some mystical event or insight. Perhaps we shall find that we have been all the time walking with those on other planes who have guided us through dreams and intuitive moments.

1. Albert and Emily Vail, Transforming Light. p. 8
2. Ibid., p. 205
3. Ibid., p. 435.
4. Beverly Galyean in Brain-Mind Bull., Mar. 5, 1984.
5. John 1: 1-3 (RSV)
6. John 14-12.
7. Rupert Sheldrake, A New Science of Life. p. 58

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CREATIVITY AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

By John F. Miller, III

Abstract: The quality of creativity in any field is a function of the mental and spiritual capacities of the individual, while the most profound examples of creativity in any field may be the result of mystical experience. The author records a poem which was given to him in this way.

On Earth, apart from biological procreation, creativity is uniquely a human activity. What distinguishes man from the lower kingdoms is his greater emotional sensitivity, mental acumen, and spiritual capacity. It is through these that man expresses himself as man. Creativity is one such expression.

But of what is the expression? It seems to me reasonable to argue that the different quality in artistic, scientific, philosophical, musical, religious and theological creativity may depend upon the development of the various natures of the creator, man.

Admittedly, creative products and expressions differ markedly in quality. Some evoke emotional responses, others mental, and still others a depth of spiritual response from those who confront them. It is plausible to posit different levels of development both of the appreciator and of the artistic creator. However, despite our recognition of this factor, I shall concern myself with only that creativity which has the highest, deepest, and most profound qualities, those which we can identify as "spiritual."

There has always been in the far East the idea that the roots of creative expression lie within the spiritual dimensions. Some of the philosophies of the East describe various levels of reality or consciousness as well as different vehicles of expression on these levels or planes. I do not think that we need, for the purposes of this presentation, to choose either a particular metaphysics or psychology. It is sufficient that we are able to experience different states of consciousness corresponding to what we might designate "the spiritual."

In the West, the spiritual source of the highest and best creative expressions was claimed, first, by the Platonic tradition, with its roots in the Hermetic, Orphic, and Pythagorean heritage. Pure art, as distinct from merely representational art, was said to get its impetus from the spiritual realms and thus possesses intrinsic value. This view was shared and elaborately developed by Plotinus in his doctrine of universal beauty. Generally, Christian artists during the first thirteen

centuries concurred, and Aquinas grounded the view philosophically. Meister Eckhart's view may be taken as a representative summary of this position: "In making a work of art the very inmost self of man comes into outwardness."

We know, however, that this spiritual view of art diminished under the humanistic influence of the Renaissance. By the 18th Century, Baumgarten could insist that art imitates nature and has as a purpose little more than arousing "sensuous knowledge." During the more materialistic 19th Century, the spiritual view of the source of creativity declined even more noticeably.

Yet, despite its decline, the view of creativity as born of the spirit never lacked for adherents. Numbered among its supporters have been such creative geniuses as Goethe, Blake, Tchaikovsky, Coleridge, Van Gogh, Rodin, and Tolstoy, to name but a few. There is no dearth of artists who have openly acknowledged a "spiritual" dimension and source of their creativity. Might we not argue that for such artists their work may be said to be the result of "mystical" experience, loosely defined? Mozart is well-known for claiming to hear an entire work at once, before ever putting pen to paper. Two days before the opening of Don Giovanni the opening overture was not written, though Mozart claimed to have heard it and known its composition. Locked in a room, he produced it with amazing rapidity. Michaelangelo was said to have apprehended the form in a piece of marble before putting chisel to the stone; once he began, he merely uncovered and released the form which lay inherent and hidden within. In such cases, creativity could be understood as a process of "capture in rapture," an ecstatic channeling of something already existing and which is given to and received by the channeler. The more open, pure, developed, and disciplined the human instrument, the more sublime the quality of the product of creativity.

Either through natural evolution or through development through psychic and spiritual practices and techniques during their life, the greatest creators would develop "soul contact," in some sense, to be able to bring down into the physical plane that which is received in the higher realms. It is as though the work exists already on another level of reality or consciousness and is merely--though it is no "mere" feat--"captured" by the artist in his ecstatic state. Great art, then, may be thought of as re-production rather than re-presentation: a drawing (duc-) forth (pro-) from the higher realms of creativity and producing them again (re-) in the physical realm, rather than simply taking what is presented on the physical level and presenting it again, photocopy-like, on the same physical level. Moreover, we might argue that it is because of this ecstatic nature of the genesis of the artistic work that we who are witness to it, be it poetry, painting, sculpture, or music, may find ourselves in ecstasy. For who among us who is sensitive has not been so lifted out of ourselves to an ecstatic, almost or even mystical, state of

consciousness? And what is true of artistic creation and creativity can be extended as well to scientific, philosophical, and religious creativity, etc. For creativity as "capture through rapture" is not limited in its content to only one kind of expression.

I am suggesting that the creative adventure affords an entree into another world and therefore access to a product whose source lies in another dimension. The creative product may exhibit its transcendental source through its content, its technique, or its general constitution; and it is to these that the appreciator may respond. What may be experienced is an "emancipation," a freeing of consciousness from its limited moorings. It would be expected that those works whose genesis had the ecstatic and mystical states of inspiration as their source would have the greater power to transfix the individual, transcend the mundane, lift the person out of himself, fill him with awe, and provide him with a sense of the mystical, the sacred, the holy, the ecstatic, which was a part of the consciousness of the creator during his creative process?

The purpose of human evolution may be said to be the development, control, and use in expression of the various dimensions, capacities, or vehicles of human nature. We marvel at the "gifted" athlete, gymnast, or dancer for the development, control, and beautiful expression of the physical body. We marvel, too, at the magnificent examples of art, sculpture, music, etc. which "touch" us and to which we respond with our whole being. Granted that the pianist must have developed his keyboard dexterity; the painter, his brush-technique; the poet, his command of simili, metaphor, and the like. But it is that altered consciousness, that other dimension, difficult to put into words, but experienced as "something more," which arouses our awe. Likewise, some are capable of responding with appreciation, bordering on intellectual insight and spiritual ecstasy, in the apprehension of laws of nature, scientific and mathematical models of order and harmony, and philosophical systems whose beauty, truth, and goodness touch the very core of the appreciator. Whatever the example of creativity, is it not appreciated for the development (physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual) of the creator, the control which goes into the creation, and finally the expression of beauty, truth, goodness, love, and wisdom which are disclosed through the creative expression?

Now it is one thing to make intellectual claims about the nature of the creative process, and it is something else to participate in the process in such a way as to existentially experience what it is to which one has given intellectual credence. I myself have had ecstatic flights of mystical intuition in which creativity was experienced, resulting in a creative product. One such experience occurred as I was preparing to write an intellectual interpretation of

Sophocles' Oedipus Rex. I had long thought, even contemplated and meditated, on this work; but my ecstatic experience occurred one night when, at 11 p.m., I sat down to write a paper for a conference to be held at the University of Florida in 1981. Since the conference was on drama, I thought that it would be really appropriate to share my interpretation of Oedipus Rex in dramatic fashion. No sooner had I thought these words than I felt a beautiful ecstasy overcome me, and words as clearly as I am speaking to you were heard by my inner ear. A day or so later, when I went to type the paper, I noticed, to my utter amazement, that the words fell naturally into iambic pentameter. Then, as I began to put them in this form, I was again overwhelmed by an ecstatic consciousness as "my" "Oedipus Rex: A Drama of Self-Disclosure" began again to take form. Let me, now, in abbreviated form, share with you the content, form, composition, and hopefully, the experience of this creative work.

"Oedipus Rex: A Drama of Self-Disclosure"

Who am I? I am the King of Thebes.
Of Polybus and Merope, the son;
But more than that--much more--I am
a man.

What's it to be man? That is the
question.
Strange how few men care and fewer
know
Who and what they are! Why could
no one
But I answer the riddle of the Sphinx?
"What goes first on four feet, then on
two,
And then, at dusk, on three?" Why, MAN,
of course,
It's man! To those with eyes to see
it's clear
The answer so transparent in the
Sphinx.¹

The body of a bull: who does not know
Taurus, the Bull, constellar Earth, our
body?

The dragon's tail, like that of Scorpio,
Clearly shows the Watery emotions of Man.
The wings of a bird, like Gemini, the Twins.
Which cause a bird to balance, like the
Scales,
On Air, the sacred symbol of man's mind.
And Leo, the Lion, by claws and element
Our firey spiritual nature stands revealed.²
Woman's breasts--ah, organs of succulent
succor--

And woman's head are symbols to the wise
Of divinity which dwells within us all.
The Sphinx was its own answer. Man it is,
And man alone, who like the macrocosm
Contains all energies in his microcosm.
Yes, man is physical, emotional, mental,
Spiritual and Divine: that's what man is.
The wise know that, those with eyes to see.

And so you come to me with olive limbs
Of suppliants, and from Zeus' priest I
learn

Our city fails to lift her head above
The pestilence, but wastes in blight; it
seems

Grave danger now has fallen on our town.
Yes, I am he, yes I, as your priest says,
Who am most powerful of mortal men.
Now Creon tells me what the god has said:
That we should find the murderers of the
King,
And punish them, and drive them from our
land.

But where are they? Right here, Apollo
says.

But where? But where? How shall we
find them out?

Now it is my job to start the quest,
Avenging state and god, and set all
right.

For such is law, the nature of this
world:

That hubris does beget its nemesis.
For cause contains the seeds of the effect.
"What one soweth, also shall he reap."

So it was the Sphinx which bade you seek
Not the murderers of your King? How weak
Is man! He does not know himself, cares
less,

And will not try his nature to disclose.
So now we find ourselves with pestilence,
Murderers in our land, and we too busy
With celebration to care, to take the
time,

To find and rid ourselves of them. O Man,
What art thou that the gods are mindful of
us?

And so if man cannot be moved to make
The odyssey of self-discovery,
Or to disclose himself yet to himself,
And cares not find the nature of mankind,
How then can we expect of him to follow

The sacred injunction on Apollo's door:
"Know thyself!" KNOW THYSELF. That's
what
Our life's about. That's all that's
worth knowing.

My task as King requires me put aside
My sacred quest. For it demands I find
The murderer of the king. So I decree:
That no one who does dwell within this
land
Shall give the murderer, whoe'er he be,
A place to live or share with him in
prayer.
But let us drive him out of our dear
town.

I further say that if in my own home
He dwells unknown to me and is my kin,
I too may suffer from my own decree.
May my own words pronounce my own
sentence!

(To Teiresias)
Come now, Teiresias, will you not
tell?
You who know it all! Well, speak,
old man!
For maybe you're the one, but for
your blindness!
What's that? What do I hear from
those old lips?
That I, I am the pollution on this
land?

(in anger)
I see, old man, see damn well too!
It's you
Who's blind, not I! Well, taunt me!
Go ahead!
And so do I know who my parents are?

Here's Creon now. Well, maybe he's
the one.
Yes, you-yes, you're the murderer
of the King!
What's that? We see in others our
worst faults?
That others are but mirrors to our-
selves?
Ah, wife! So tell me of the prophesy:
That Laius was to die from his son's
hands!
Well, so much for the prophesy! For it
Was robbers, wasn't it, who killed him?
Where?

Where did you say? Where three main
highways meet?
O God! His son, but what of him? O Lord!
Tied, and ankles pierced! And left to
die!
And when was it that King Laius was
killed?
Before I came!
O God, I think that I've condemned myself!
Who told you of this tale? A servant?
Here?
In our employ? A shepherd? Send for him!

Long ago, whilst I was still in Corinth
With my father, Polybus, a drunk
At banquet table said that I, that I
Was not my father's son. Bacchus, they
say,
Reveals through wine his dark divinity.
In vino veritas! So I went off
To Delphi, to consult the word of god,
There to learn the truth about my birth.
No man, they say, can flee from his own
Fate.

"What fates impose, that men must needs
abide;
It boots not to resist both wind and
tide."⁴
They say that there is a divinity
"That shapes our ends, roughhew them
how we will."⁵

But look! Here comes a messenger!
What news?
Good sir? Bad news? My father,
Polybus,
Is dead! And by disease? A Janus-
message,
Sad, with joy! How then, you gods
say you
That I should be his murderer? So
there!
You fools, consult the shrieking birds
and stars!
He's dead, and yet untouched by my own
hand.
Say, there! Is Mother still alive,
good sir?
I fear the oracle's curse that I would
lie
With her as wife. That's why I left
my home.
I need not fear, you say? And why?
Because

Merope was in no way kin to me?
O no! How's that? I was a shepherd's
gift?
Wife! Silence! I shall find out!
I SHALL!
So let the shepherd now be brought
to me!

So he is here. Well, let him speak.
Did you
Give this man the child of whom he
asks?
O God! O God! Where did you get
the child?
What man? WHAT MAN? Speak now!
From Polybus?
And from Jocasta, that the Fates be
foiled!
O God! My fate has now come true.

(Oedipus puts out his eyes)
So now I'm blind; no longer need my
eyes.
And like the seer, who sees, though
blind he be,
With Mother/Matter now deceased I
find
No further use for eyes of clay or
dust.

(reflectively)
What fools we mortals be!⁶ Who is our
Source?
Who are our Parents? Father? Mother?
Who?
Mr. Jones and Mrs. Jones?
Mr. Smith and Mrs. Smith?
Howard, Johnson, Miller, Green?
No, that was my mistake!
Whom do we with right call Father?
God!
God! And who's our rightful Mother?
MATTER!
So who am I? And who are you? And
you?
Who are we all, everyone of us?
EXECUTIONERS OF GOD, I say!
KILLERS OF THE FATHER!
MURDERERS!
HIM I dragged from Sacred Chariot
And slew that I might reign and rule.
That I might play the King, govern
the town,
As long as my Father lived I could
not rule,

Could not inherit kingdom and be
King,
I HAD TO KILL HIM, so that I could
live!
It's hubris, moral blindness, arro-
gance
To think that my life ever was my
own.
Who am I but a son, My Father's
son,
Whose Life does pulse so deep
within my veins.

"Persons," we call ourselves, in
Latin, "Masks."
But masks of what? Of Whom? Of
God! OF GOD!
And she who was my Mother, MATTER--
mater,
"Material," "maternity," "material,"
Madre, Mutter, MATTER, her I married.
Lay with, Lay in, surrounded by her
flesh,
I penetrated deep within her loins.
She, my Mother/Matter, and my Wife,
She with whom I slept--and what a
sleep,
A sleep of IGNORANCE, and Cave-dark
Night,
Of dark imprisoned sleep, a Matter's
tomb,
Which hides the sacred Light, the
Father's gift.
Men will say I have a "complex", that
All males desire their mothers. What's
the truth?
We would our Father's place usurp
indeed,
As we too seek to gain the Mother's
love.
But deeper, higher, and more holy
truth:
That in our lust for matter, Mother's
gift,
The luring and alluring pleasures fair,
We kill the Father's nature and reside
In our material, animal, lower side,
Ignoring divinity which dwells within,
As dead, so long as we our Mother serve.

They say the Hebrews' myth of Genesis
Suggests that man was made of dust of
Earth
And Breath of God. Now that depicts
the truth.

Merope was in no way kin to me?
O no! How's that? I was a shepherd's
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And slew that I might reign and rule.
That I might play the King, govern
the town,
As long as my Father lived I could
not rule,

We Greeks spin more elaborate tales:
that Zeus
Before mankind, a race of Titans made,
And gave to them his only-begotten Son,
Dionysos, by name, a babe still then.
But ruthless Titans, lawless, cruel and
bold,
Did kill and eat that Holy Child, and
Zeus
In anger threw his bolts, and from the
ashes
Of Titans who had killed God's own
dear Son,
Zeus did make man. So like the Hebrew
tale
We Greeks tell, too, of mankind's
dual sides:
Dust or ashes, Breath or Spark of God.
"Dust to dust, and ashes to ashes," we
say.
Truth is One, no matter where it's found.
They say religions everywhere tell of
Kenosis, or of God's Self-Emptying.
The Pouring Out of God that Sons may
live.
We Greeks tell of this truth, and now I
know
And understand the symbols in this way:
That Zeus when chronological Time
began
Castrated his own Father, Kronos--
Chronos⁸⁻⁻
And threw the scrotum full of sperm,
the Life-
Producing seeds of LOVE upon the Sea;
And from the foam⁹ was born Aphrodite.
So all mankind agrees that All That Is
Is from the sacrificial Life of God.
That All There Is is Love, and Love is
All,
The Father's Love poured in and as
Creation.
God veils Himself in many forms of Love.

And now I go. Away from Thebes as
though
I were a primal man in some Garden
divine,
Having tasted of experience's bitter
fruit,
That I might know myself. The Jews,
they say,
Have such a tale. They say 'round sacred
tree
Was coiled a Serpent, Wisdom's holy sign,

Which told the man and woman there that if
They ate the fruit of that one tree they
would

Discover who they were. God had forbade,
But only conditionally, that if they ate,
They then must surely die.¹ We Greeks also
Have such a myth, of Psyche who, by Eros,
Fell; for in her search to find the truth
Of mankind's birth she picked the
Narcissus¹⁰ flower.

The ground did open and she fell, drawn
down

By Hades to his dark black underground.
And now I understand the sacred truth,
The ancient mystic message of that myth:
That this is Hell, the Underworld, the
"Cave"

As Plato calls it in his allegory.¹¹
We are in Darkness, though we do possess
A Light, "which lighteth every man who
comes

Into the world."¹²

I must go now. As Socrates did say
To his condemning jury on that day:
"Now the hour to part has come.

I do to die, you go to live.

Which of us goes to the better lot
Is known to no one, but the god."¹³
But said in irony, beloved Sage,
For wise art thou, and Wisdom is thy
bride.

Thou knowest truly that by death we
live!

By dying to the flesh, to Mother/Matter,
We wake within our breasts the Father's
Light.

And so with journey done I return
Home,

For I have been an errant Prodigal Son¹⁴
Wandering in the world, seeking myself.

But what of those who do not care to seek?
What of those who yet with Mother lie?
"Let sleeping dogs lie," we Greeks in
proverb say,

Lest they awake and bite the hand of
him

Who would but lead them to the Light.

They'll slay

As they slew Dionysos and Orpheus
And nailed beloved Krishna to a tree,
As they throughout the ages crucified
The Holy Ones who came that they
might live.

Self dies but hard, upon a Cross or Tree.

Ah, well, who will but hear? Who will but
see?
I must go now. Goodbye, and fare thee
well.¹⁵

¹"Sphinx A fabulous being composed of several parts of the human being and four of various animals. The sphinx at Thebes had the head of a woman, the body of a bull or dog, the claws of a lion, the tail of a dragon and the wings of a bird." J.E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1962).

²The Twelve constellations of the Zodiac are divided into earth, water, air, and fire signs signifying respectively the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual nature of man. Taurus is an earth sign; Scorpio, water; Gemini, the Twins, and Libra, the Scales, air; and Leo, fire.

³Galatians 6:7

⁴Shakespeare, King Henry VI, Part III, Act IV, Sc. 3, line 57.

⁵Shakespeare, Hamlet, Act V, Sc. ii, lines 10-11.

⁶Cf. Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Act III, Sc. ii, line 115.

⁷"Persona": Latin for the masks which actors on the Roman stage wore and through which (per-) the sound (sona) of their voice was heard.

⁸Chronos is the Greek word for chronological time; Kronos (Latin: Saturn) and Chronos were often identified in mythology and theogony.

⁹Aphros is the Greek for "foam."

¹⁰Narcissus was the Greek youth who fell in love with his own image in the pool; hence he becomes a symbol of self-love, which draws the soul into matter. The Hebrew version, in Genesis 3, is the Fall, original sin: expulsion from the Garden of Eden.

¹¹Plato, Republic, Book VII, 914-918.

¹²John 1:9.

¹³Plato, Apology, 42.

¹⁴Luke 15:11-32.

¹⁵The translation of Sophocles' Oedipus Rex which I have used is by Albert Cook, reprinted in Ten Greek Plays, ed. by L.R. Lind (Boston: The Riverside Press, 1957).

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